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T H E
I L I A D
O F
H O M E R.

TRANSLATED BY
ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.

VOLUME SECOND.

Quis Martem tunica tectum adamantina
Digne scripserit? aut pulvere Troico
Nigrum Merionen? aut ope Palladis
Tydiden superis parem?

HOR.

L O N D O N,

Printed for A. HORACE, P. VIRGIL, and T. CICERO,
in *Paternoster-Row*, J. MILTON in *St. Paul's Church-*
yard, D. PLATO, and A. POPE in the *Strand*.

M D C C L I X.

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T H E
I L I A D.
B O O K VI.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The Episodes of Glaucus and Diomed, and of Hector and Andromache.

THE Gods having left the field, the Grecians prevail.

Helenus, the chief augur of Troy, commands Hector to return to the city, in order to appoint a solemn procession of the queen and the Trojan matrons to the temple of Minerva, to entreat her to remove Diomed from the fight. The battle relaxing during the absence of Hector, Glaucus and Diomed have an interview between the two armies; where coming to the knowledge of the friendship and hospitality past between their ancestors, they make exchange of their arms. Hector, having performed the orders of Helenus, prevailed upon Paris to return to the battle, and taken a tender leave of his wife Andromache, hastens again to the field.

The scene is first in the field of battle, between the rivers Simois and Scamander, and then changes to Troy.

NOW heav'n forsakes the fight: th'immortals yield
To human force and human skill, the field:
Dark show'rs of jav'lins fly from foes to foes;
Now here, now there, the tide of combat flows;

While Troy's fam'd * streams that bound the deathful
plain

5

On either side run purple to the main.

Great Ajax first to conquest led the way,
Broke the thick ranks, and turn'd the doubtful day.

The Thracian Acamas his faulchion found,

And hew'd th' enormous giant to the ground; 10

His thund'ring arm a deadly stroke imprest

Where the black horse-hair nodded o'er his crest:

Fix'd in his front the brazen weapon lies,

And seals in endless shades his swimming eyes.

Next Teuthras' son distain'd the sands with blood, 15

Axylus, hospitable, rich and good:

* Scamander and Simois.

v. 7. *First Ajax.*] Ajax performs his exploits immediately upon the departure of the Gods from the battle. It is observed that this hero is never assisted by the deities, as most of the rest are: see his character in the notes on the seventh book. The expression in the Greek is, that he *brought light to his troops*, which M. Dacier takes to be metaphorical: I do not see but it may be literal; he broke the thick squadrons of the enemy, and opened a passage for the light.

v. 9. *The Thracian Acamas.*] This Thracian prince is the same in whose likeness Mars appears in the preceding book, rallying the Trojans, and forcing the Greeks to retire. In the present description of his strength and size, we see with what propriety this personage was selected by the poet, as fit to be assumed by the God of war.

v. 16. *Axylus, hospitable.*] This beautiful character of Axylus has not been able to escape the misunderstanding of some of the commentators, who thought

In fair Arisba's walls (his native place)

He held his feat ; a friend to human race.

Homer designed it as a reproof of an undistinguished generosity. It is evidently a panegyric on that virtue, and not improbably on the memory of some excellent, but unfortunate man in that country, whom the poet honours with the noble title of *A friend to mankind*. It is indeed a severe reproof of the ingratitude of men, and a kind of satire on human race, while he represents this lover of his species miserably perishing without assistance from any of those numbers he had obliged. This death is very moving, and the circumstance of a faithful servant's dying by his side, well imagined, and natural to such a character. His manner of keeping house near a frequented highway, and relieving all travellers, is agreeable to that ancient hospitality which we now only read of. There is abundance of this spirit every where in the *Odyssey*. The patriarchs in the old testament sit at their gates to see those that pass by, and intreat them to enter into their houses : this cordial manner of invitation is particularly described in the 18th and 19th chapters of *Genesis*. The eastern nations seem to have had a peculiar disposition to these exercises of humanity, which continues in a great measure to this day. It is yet a piece of charity frequent with the Turks, to erect Caravanserahs, or inns for the reception of travellers. Since I am upon this head, I must mention one or two extraordinary examples of ancient hospitality. Diodorus Siculus writes of Gallias of Agrigentum, that having built several inns for the relief of strangers, he appointed persons at the gates to invite all who travelled to make use of them ; and that this example was followed by many others who were inclined after the ancient manner to live in a humane and beneficent correspondence with mankind. That this Gallias entertained and clothed at one time no less than five hundred horsemen ; and that there were in his cellars three

Fast by the road, his ever-open door

Oblig'd the wealthy, and reliev'd the poor.

20

hundred vessels, each of which contained an hundred hogheads of wine. The same author tells us of another Agrigentine, that at the marriage of his daughter feasted all the people of his city, who at that time were above twenty thousand.

Herodotus in his seventh book has a story of this kind, which is prodigious, being of a private man so immensely rich as to entertain Xerxes and his whole army. I shall transcribe the passage as I find it translated to my hand.

“ Pythius the son of Atys, a Lydian, then residing in
“ Cælene, entertained the king and all his army with
“ great magnificence, and offered him his treasures to-
“ wards the expence of the war; which liberality Xer-
“ xes communicating to the Persians about him, and
“ asking who this Pythius was, and what riches he might
“ have, to enable him to make such an offer? received
“ this answer: Pythius, saith they, is the person who
“ presented your father Darius with a plane-tree and vine
“ of gold; and after you is the richest man we know
“ in the world. Xerxes, surprized with these last
“ words, asked him to what sum his treasures might a-
“ mount. I shall conceal nothing from you, said Py-
“ thius, nor pretend to be ignorant of my own wealth;
“ but being perfectly informed of the state of my ac-
“ compts, shall tell you the truth with sincerity. When
“ I heard you was ready to begin the march towards
“ the Grecian sea, I resolved to present you with a sum
“ of money towards the charge of the war; and to that
“ end having taken an account of my riches, I found,
“ by computation, that I had two thousand talents of
“ silver, and three millions nine hundred ninety-three
“ thousand pieces of gold, bearing the stamp of Dari-
“ us. These treasures I freely give you, because I
“ shall be sufficiently furnished with whatever is neces-

To stern Tydides now he falls a prey,
No friend to guard him in the dreadful day !
Breathless the good man fell, and by his side
His faithful servant, old Calchius dy'd.

By great Euryalus was Drefus slain, 25
And next he laid Opheltius on the plain.

Two twins were near, bold, beautiful and young,
From a fair Naiad and Bucolion sprung :
(Laomedon's white flocks Bucolion fed,
That monarch's first-born by a foreign bed; 30

"fary to life by the labour of my servants and husband-
men.

"Xerxes heard these words with pleasure, and in an-
"swer to Pythius, said; My Lydian host, since I parted
"from Susa I have not found a man beside yourself, who
"has offered to entertain my army, or voluntarily to
"contribute his treasures to promote the present expe-
"dition. You alone have treated my army magnificent-
"ly, and readily offered me immense riches: therefore,
"in return of your kindness, I make you my host; and
"that you may be master of the intire sum of four mil-
"lions of gold, I will give you seven thousand Darian
"pieces out of my own treasure. Keep then all the
"riches you now possess; and if you know how to con-
"tinue always in the same good disposition, you shall
"never have reason to repent of your affection to me,
"either now or in future time."

The sum here offered by Pythius amounts by Brere-
wood's computation, to three millions three hundred se-
venty five thousand pounds sterling, according to the lesser
valuation of talents. I make no apology for inserting so
remarkable a passage at length, but shall only add, that it
was at last the fate of this Pythius (like our Axylus) to
experience the ingratitude of man; his eldest son being
afterwards cut in pieces by the same Xerxes.

In secret woods he won the Naiad's grace,
 And two fair infants crown'd his strong embrace.)
 Here dead they lay in all their youthful charms;
 The ruthless victor stripp'd their shining arms.

Astyalus by Polypaetes fell; 36
 Ulysses' spear Pidytes sent to hell;
 By Teucer's shaft brave Aretaon bled,
 And Nestor's son laid stern Ablerus dead;
 Great Agamemnon, leader of the brave,
 The mortal wound of rich Elatus gave, 40
 Who held in Pedasus his proud abode,
 And till'd the banks where silver Satnio flow'd.
 Melanthius by Eurypylus was slain;
 And Phylacus from Leitus flies in vain.

Unblest Adrastus next at mercy lies. 45
 Beneath the Spartan spear, a living prize.
 Scar'd with the din and tumult of the fight,
 His headlong steeds, precipitate in flight,
 Rush'd on a Tamarisk's strong trunk, and broke
 The shatter'd chariot from the crooked yoke; 50
 Wide o'er the field, resistless as the wind,
 For Troy they fly, and leave their lord behind.
 Prone on his face he sinks beside the wheel:
 Atrides o'er him shakes his vengeful steel;
 The fallen chief in suppliant posture press'd 55
 The victor's knees, and thus his pray'r address'd.

Oh spare my youth, and for the life I owe
 Large gifts of price my father shall bestow;

When fame shall tell, that not in battle slain

Thy hollow ships his captive son detain,

60.

Agamemnon takes away that Trojan's life whom Menelaus had pardoned, and is not blamed by Homer for so doing, must be ascribed to the uncivilized manners of those times, when mankind was not united by the bonds of a rational society, and is not therefore to be imputed to the poet, who followed nature as it was in his days. The historical books of the old testament abound in instances of the like cruelty to conquered enemies.

Virgil had this part of Homer in his view, when he described the death of his Magus in the tenth Æneid. Those lines of his prayer, where he offers a ransom, are translated from this of Adrastus: but both the prayer and the answer Æneas makes when he refuses him mercy, also receive a great addition of beauty and propriety from the occasion on which he inserts them: young Pallas is just killed, and Æneas seeking to be revenged upon Turnus, meets this Magus. Nothing can be a more artful piece of address than the first line of that supplication, if we consider the character of Æneas, to whom it is made?

Per patrios manes, per spes surgentis Iuli,

Te precor, hanc animam serves natoque, patrique.

And what can exceed the closeness and fulness of that reply to it?

————— *Belli commercia Turnus*

Sustulit ista prior, jam tum Pallante perempto.

Hoc patris Anchisæ manes, hoc sentit Iulus.

This removes the imputation of cruelty from Æneas, which had less agreed with his character than it does with Agamemnon's; whose reproof to Menelaus in this place is not unlike that of Samuel to Saul, for not killing Agag.

Rich heaps of brass shall in thy tent be told ;
And steel well-temper'd, and persuasive gold.

He said : compassion touch'd the hero's heart,
He stood suspended with the lifted dart :
As pity pleaded for his vanquish'd prize, 65
Stern Agamemnon swift to vengeance flies,
And furious, thus. Oh impotent of mind !
Shall these, shall these Atrides' mercy find ?
Well hast thou known proud Troy's perfidious land,
And well her natives merit at thy hand ! 70
Not one of all the race, nor sex, nor age,
Shall save a Trojan from our boundless rage :
Ilion shall perish whole, and bury all ;
Her babes, her infants at the breast, shall fall.
A dreadful lesson of exampled fate, 75
To warn the nations, and to curb the great !

The monarch spoke ; the words with warmth address'd
To rigid justice steel'd his brother's breast.
Fierce from his knees the hapless chief he thrust ;
The monarch's jav'lin stretch'd him in the dust. 80

v. 74. *Her infants at the breast shall fall.*] Or, her infants yet in the womb, for it will bear either sense. But I think madam Dacier in the right, in her affirmation that the Greeks were not arrived to that pitch of cruelty to rip up the wombs of women with child. Homer (says she) to remove all equivocal meaning from this phrase, adds the words *νεῖρον ἐόντα*, *juvenem puerulum existentem*, which would be ridiculous, were it said of a child yet unborn. Besides, he would never have represented one of his first heroes capable of so barbarous a crime, or at least would not have commen-

Then pressing with his foot his panting heart,
 Forth from the slain he tugg'd the reeking dart.
 Old Nestor saw, and rous'd the warrior's rage ;
 Thus, heroes ! thus the vig'rous combate wage !
 No son of Mars descend, for servile gains, 85
 To touch the booty, while a foe remains.
 Behold yon' glitt'ring host, your future spoil !
 First gain the conquest, then reward the toil.

And now had Greece eternal fame acquir'd,
 And frighted Troy within her walls retir'd ; 90
 Had not sage Helenus her state redrest,
 Taught by the Gods that mov'd his sacred breast ;
 Where Hector stood, with great Æneas join'd,
 The seer reveal'd the counsels of his mind.

Ye gen'rous chiefs ! on whom th' immortals lay 95
 The cares and glories of this doubtful day,

ded him (as he does just after) for such a wicked exhortation.

v. 88. *First gain the conquest, then reward the toil.*] This important maxim of war is very naturally introduced, upon Nestor's having seen Menelaus ready to spare an enemy for the sake of a ransom. It was for such lessons as these (says M. Dacier) that Alexander so much esteemed Homer, and studied his poem. He made his use of this precept in the battle of Arbela, when Parmenio being in danger of weakening the main body to defend the baggage, he sent this message to him : leave the baggage there ; for if we gain the victory, we shall not only recover what is our own, but be masters of all that is the enemy's. Histories ancient and modern are filled with examples of enterprizes that have miscarried, and battles that have been lost, by the greediness of soldiers for pillage.

On whom your aids, your country's hopes depend,
 Wise to consult, and active to defend !
 Here, at our gates, your brave efforts unite,
 Turn back the routed, and forbid the flight: 100
 Ere yet their wives soft arms the cowards gain,
 The sport and insult of the hostile train.
 When your commands have hearten'd ev'ry band,
 Ourselves, here fix'd, will make the dang'rous stand;
 Press'd as we are, and fore of former fight, 105
 These straits demand our last remains of might.
 Meanwhile, thou Hector to the town retire,
 And teach our mother what the gods require :

v. 97. *Wise to consult, and active to defend.*] This is a two-fold branch of praise, expressing the excellence of these princes both in council and in battle. I think M. Dacier's translation does not come up to the sense of the original. *Les plus hardis et les plus experimentez des nos capitains.*

v. 107. *Thou Hector to the town.*] It has been a modern objection to Homer's conduct, that Hector, upon whom the whole fate of the day depended, is made to retire from the battle only to carry a message to Troy concerning a sacrifice, which might have been done as well by any other. They think it as absurd in Helenus to advise this, and in Hector to comply with it. What occasioned this false criticism, was, that they imagined it to be a piece of advice, and not a command. Helenus was a priest and augur of the highest rank, he enjoins it as a point of religion, and Hector obeys him as one inspired from heaven. The Trojan army was in the utmost distress, occasioned by the prodigious slaughter made by Diomed: there was therefore more reason and necessity to propitiate Minerva who assisted that hero; which Helenus might know, though Hector would have chosen

Direct the queen to lead th' assembled train

Of Troy's chief matrons to Minerva's fane;

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chosen to have stayed and trusted to the arm of flesh. Here is nothing but what may agree with each of their characters. Hector goes as he was obliged in religion, but not before he has animated the troops, re-established the combat, repulsed the Greeks to some distance, received a promise from Helenus that they would make a stand at the gates, and given one himself to the army that he would soon return to the fight: all which Homer has been careful to specify, to save the honour, and preserve the character, of this hero. As to Helenus's part, he saw the straits his countrymen were reduced to, he knew his authority as a priest, and designed to revive the courage of the troops by a promise of divine assistance. Nothing adds more courage to the minds of men than superstition, and perhaps it was the only expedient then left; much like a modern practice in the army, to enjoin a fast when they wanted provision. Helenus could no way have made his promise more credible, than by sending away Hector; which looked like an assurance that nothing could prejudice them during his absence on such a religious account. No leader of less authority than Hector could so properly have enjoined this solemn act of religion; and lastly, no other, whose valour was less known than his, could have left the army in this juncture without a taint upon his honour. Homer makes this piety succeed; Paris is brought back to the fight, the Trojans afterwards prevail, and Jupiter appears openly in their favour, l. 8. Though after all, I cannot dissemble my opinion, that the poet's chief intention in this, was to introduce that fine episode of the parting of Hector and Andromache. This change of the scene to Troy furnishes him with a great number of beauties. *By this means* (says Eustathius) *his poem is for a time divested of the fierceness and violence of battles, and being as it were washed from slaughter and blood, be-*

Unbar the sacred gates, and seek the pow'r
 With offer'd vows, in Ilion's topmost tow'r.
 The largest mantle her rich wardrobes hold,
 Most priz'd for art, and labour'd o'er with gold,
 Before the goddess' honour'd knees be spread; 115
 And twelve young heifers to her altars led.
 If so the pow'r, atton'd by fervent pray'r,
 Our wives, our infants, and our city spare,

comes calm and smiling by the beauty of these various episodes.

v. 117. *If so the pow'r, atton'd, etc.*] The poet here plainly supposes Helenus, by his skill in augury or some other divine inspiration, well informed that the might of Diomed, which wrought such great destruction among the Trojans, was the gift of Pallas incensed against them. The prophet therefore directs prayers, offerings and sacrifices to be made to appease the anger of this offended goddess; not to invoke the mercy of any propitious deity. This is conformable to the whole system of Pagan superstition, the worship whereof being grounded, not on love but fear, seems directed rather to avert the malice and anger of a wrathful and mischievous demon, than to implore the assistance and protection of a benevolent being. In this strain of religion this same prophet is introduced by Virgil in the third Æneid, giving particular direction to Æneas to appease the indignation of Juno, as the only means which could bring his labours to a prosperous end.

*Unum illud tibi, nate Dea, præque omnibus unum
 Prædicam, et repetens iterumque iterumque monebo:
 Junonis magnæ primum prece numen adora;
 Junoni cane vota libens, dominamque potentem
 Supplicibus supera donis.—— :*

And far avert Tydides' wasteful ire,
That mows whole troops and makes all Troy retire. 120
Not thus Achilles taught our hosts to dread,
Sprung tho' he was from more than mortal bed ;
Not thus resistless rul'd the stream of fight,
In rage unbounded, and unmatch'd in might.

Hector obedient heard ; and, with a bound, 125
Leap'd from his trembling chariot to the ground ;
Thro' all his host, inspiring force, he flies,
And bids the thunder of the battle rise.
With rage recruited the bold Trojans glow,
And turn the tyde of conflict on the foe : 130
Fierce in the front he shakes two dazzling spears :
All Greece recedes, and midst her triumph fears.
Some God, they thought, who rul'd the fate of wars,
Shot down avenging from the vault of stars.

Then thus, aloud. Ye dauntless Dardans hear ! 135
And you whom distant nations send to war !
Be mindful of the strength your fathers bore ;
Be still yourselves, and Hector asks no more.
One hour demands me in the Trojan wall,
To bid our altars flame, and victims fall : 140
Nor shall, I trust, the matrons holy train
And rev'rend elders, seek the Gods in vain.

This said, with ample strides the hero past ;
The shield's large orb behind his shoulder cast,
His neck o'ershading, to his ankle hung ; 145
And as he march'd, the brazen buckler rung.

Now paus'd the battle, (godlike Hector gone)
When daring Glaucus and great Tydeus' son

v. 147. *The interview of Glaucus and Diomed.*] No passage in our author has been the subject of more severe and groundless criticisms than this, where these two heroes enter into a long conversation (as they will have it) in the heat of a battle. Monsieur Dacier's answer in defence of Homer is so full, that I cannot do better than to translate it from his remarks on the 26th chapter of Aristotle's Poetic. There can be nothing more unjust than the criticisms past upon things that are the effect of custom. It was usual in ancient times for soldiers to talk together before they encountered. Homer is full of examples of this sort, and he very well deserves we should be so just as to believe, he had never done it so often, but that it was agreeable to the manners of his age. But this is not only a thing of custom, but founded on reason itself. The ties of hospitality in those times were held more sacred than those of blood; and it is on that account Diomed gives so long an audience to Glaucus, whom he acknowledges to be his guest, with whom it was not lawful to engage in combat. Homer makes an admirable use of this conjecture, to introduce an entertaining history after so many battles as he has been describing, and to unbend the mind of his reader by a recital of so much variety as the story of the family of Sisyphus. It may be farther observed, with what address and management he places this long conversation; it is not during the heat of an obstinate battle, which had been too unseasonable to be excused by any custom whatever; but he brings it in after he has made Hector retire into Troy, when the absence of so powerful an enemy had given Diomed that leisure which he could not have had otherwise. One need only read the judicious remark of Eustathius upon this place. *The poet (says he) after having caused Hector to go out of the fight, interrupts the violence of*

Between both armies met : the chiefs from far

Observ'd each other, and had mark'd for war.

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wars, and gives some relaxation to the reader, in causing him to pass from the confusion and disorder of the action to the tranquillity and security of an historical narration. For by means of the happy episode of Glaucus, he casts a thousand pleasing wonders into his poem ; as fables, that include beautiful allegories, histories genealogies, sentences, ancient customs, and several other graces that tend to the diversifying of his work, and which by breaking (as one may say) the monotony of it, agreeably instruct the reader. Let us observe in how fine a manner Homer has hereby praised both Diomed and Hector. For he makes us know, that as long as Hector is in the field, the Greeks have not the least leisure to take breath ; and that as soon as he quits it, all the Trojans, however they had regained all their advantages, were not able to employ Diomed so far as to prevent his entertaining himself with Glaucus without any danger to his party. Some may think after all, that though we may justify Homer, yet we cannot excuse the manners of his time : it not being natural for men with swords in their hands to dialogue together in cold blood just before they engage. But not to alledge, that these very manners yet remain in those countries, which have not been corrupted by the commerce of other nations, (which is a great sign of their being natural) what reason can be offered that it is more natural to fall on at first sight with rage and fierceness, than to speak to an enemy before the encounter ? Thus far monsieur. Dacier ; and St. Evremont asks humorously, if it might not be as proper in that country for men to harangue before they fought, as it is in England to make speeches before they are hanged ?

That Homer is not in general apt to make unseasonable harangues (as these censurers would represent) may appear from that remarkable care he has shewn in many places to avoid them : as when in the fifth book

Near as they drew, Tydides thus began.

What art thou, boldest of the race of man ?

Æneas, being cured on a sudden in the middle of the fight, is seen with surprize by his soldiers ; he specifies with particular caution, that they *asked him no questions how he became cured*, in a time of so much business and action. Again, when there is a necessity in the same book that Minerva should have a conference with Diomed, in order to engage him against Mars (after her prohibition to him to fight with the gods) Homer chuses a time for that speech, just when the hero is retired behind his chariot to take breath, which was the only moment that could be spared during the hurry of that whole engagement. One might produce many instances of the same kind.

The discourse of Glaucus to Diomed is severely censured, not only on account of the circumstance of time and place, but likewise on the score of the subject, which is taxed as improper, and foreign to the end and design of the poem. But the critics, who have made this objection, seem neither to comprehend the design of the poet in general, nor the particular aim of this discourse. Many passages in the best ancient poets appear unaffected at present, which probably gave the greatest delight to their first readers, because they were very nearly interested in what was there related. It is very plain that Homer designed this poem as a monument to the honour of the Greeks, who, though consisting of several independent societies, were yet very national in point of glory, being strongly affected with every thing that seemed to advance the honour of their common country, and resentful of any indignity offered to it. This disposition was the ground of that grand alliance which is the subject of this poem. To men so fond of their country's glory, what could be more agreeable than to read a history, filled with wonders of a noble family transplanted from Greece into Asia ? They might here learn with pleasure that the Grecian virtues did not degenerate

Our eyes, 'till now, that aspect ne'er beheld,
 Where fame is reap'd amid th'embattel'd field:
 Yet far before the troops thou dar'st appear, 155
 And meet a lance the fiercest heroes fear.
 Unhappy they, and born of luckless fires,
 Who tempt our fury when Minerva fires!
 But if from heav'n, celestial thou descend;
 Know with immortals we no more contend. 160

by removing into distant climes; but especially they must be affected with uncommon delight to find that Sarpedon and Glaucus, the bravest of the Trojan auxiliaries, were originally Greeks.

Tasso in this manner has introduced an agreeable episode, which shews Clorinda the offspring of Christian parents, though engaged in the service of the Infidels, Canto 12.

v. 149. *Between both armies met, etc.*] It is usual with Homer, before he introduces a hero, to make as it were a halt, to render him the more remarkable. Nothing could more prepare the attention and expectation of the reader, than this circumstance at the first meeting of Diomed and Glaucus. Just at the time when the mind begins to be weary with the battle, it is diverted with the prospect of a single combat, which of a sudden turns to an interview of friendship, and an unexpected scene of sociable virtue. The whole air of the conversation between these two heroes has something heroically solemn in it.

v. 159. *But if from heav'n, etc.*] A quick change of mind from the greatest impiety to as great superstition, is frequently observable in men, who having been guilty of the most heinous crimes without any remorse, on the sudden are filled with doubts and scruples about the most lawful or indifferent actions. This seems the present case of Dionæd, who having knowingly wound-

Not Long Lycurgus view'd the golden light,
 That daring man who mix'd with gods in fight;
 Bacchus, and Bacchus' votaries, he drove
 With brandish'd steel from Nyssa's sacred grove,
 Their consecrated spears lay scatter'd round, 165
 With curling vines and twisted ivy bound;
 While Bacchus headlong fought the briny flood,
 And Thetis' arms receiv'd the trembling God.
 Nor fail'd the crime th'immortals wrath to move,
 (Th'immortals blest with endless ease above) 170

ed and insulted the deities, is now afraid to engage the first man he meets, lest perhaps a God might be concealed in that shape. This disposition of Diomed produces the question he puts to Glaucus, which without this consideration will appear impertinent, and so naturally occasions that agreeable episode of Bellerophon, which Glaucus relates in answer to Diomed.

v. 161. *Not long Lycurgus, etc.*] What Diomed here says is the effect of remorse, as if he had exceeded the commission of Pallas in encountering with the Gods, and dreaded the consequences of proceeding too far. At least he had no such commission now, and besides, was no longer capable of distinguishing them from men, (a faculty she had given him in the foregoing book :) he therefore mentions this story of Lycurgus as an example that sufficed to terrify him from so rash an undertaking. The ground of the fable they say is this; Lycurgus caused most of the vines of his country to be rooted up, so that his subjects were obliged to mix it with water, when it was less plentiful: hence it was feigned that Thetis received Bacchus into her bosom.

v. 170. *Immortals blest with endless ease.*] Though Dacier's and most of the versions take no notice of the epithets used in this place, *Θεοὶ ῥᾶν ἑσθλῶντις*, *Dii facile*

Depriv'd of sight by their avenging doom,
 Cheerless he breath'd, and wander'd in the gloom :
 Then sunk unpity'd to the dire abodes,
 A wretch accurst, and hated by the Gods !
 I brave not heav'n : but if the fruits of earth 175
 Sustain thy life, and human be thy birth ;
 Bold as thou art, too prodigal of breath,
 Approach and enter the dark gates of death.

What, or from whence I am, or who my sire,
 (Reply'd the chief) can Tydeus' son inquire ? 180
 Like leaves on trees the race of man is found,
 Now green in youth, now with'ring on the ground ;

feu beate viventes ; the translator thought it a beauty which he could not but endeavour to preserve. Milton seems to have had this in his eye in his second book ;

————— *Thou wilt bring me soon*
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The Gods who live at ease—————

v. 187. *Approach, and enter the dark gates of death.*] This haughty air which Homer gives his heroes was doubtless a copy of the manners and hyperbolical speeches of those times. Thus Goliath to David, 1 Sam. ch. 17. *Approach, and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field.* The orientals speak the same language to this day.

v. 181. *Like leaves on trees.*] There is a noble gravity in the beginning of this speech of Glaucus, according to the true style of antiquity, *Few and evil are our days.* This beautiful thought of our author, whereby the race of men are compared to the leaves of trees, is celebrated by Simonides in a fine fragment extant in Stobæus. The same thought may be found in Eccle-

Another race the following spring supplies,
 They fall successive, and successive rise;
 So generations in their course decay, 185
 So flourish these, when those are past away.
 But if thou still persist to search my birth,
 Then hear a tale that fills the spacious earth.

A city stands on Argos' utmost bound,
 (Argos the fair for warlike steeds renown'd) 190
 Æolian Sisyphus, with wisdom blest,
 In ancient time the happy walls posselt,

fiasticus, ch. 14. v. 18. almost in the same words; *As of the green leaves on a thick tree, some fall and some grow; so is the generation of flesh and blood, one cometh to an end, and another is born.*

The reader, who has seen so many passages imitated from Homer by succeeding poets, will no doubt be pleased to see one of an ancient poet which Homer has here imitated; this is a fragment of Musæus preserved by Clemens Alexandrinus in his Stromata, lib. 6.

Ὡς δ' αὐτως καὶ φύλλα φύει ζείδωρος ἄραρα
 Ἄλλα μὲν ἐν μελίησιν ἀποφθίνει, ἄλλα δὲ φύει
 Ὡς δὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπων γενεὴ καὶ φύλλον ἐλίσσει

Though this comparison be justly admired for its beauty in this obvious application to the mortality and succession of human life, it seems however designed by the poet in this place as a proper emblem of the transitory state, not of men, but of families, which being by their misfortunes or follies fallen and decayed, do again in a happier season revive and flourish in the same and virtues of their posterity: in this sense it is a direct answer to what Diomed had asked, as well as a proper preface to what Glaucus relates of his own family, which having been extinct in Corinth, had recovered new life in Lycia.

Then call'd Ephyre : Glaucus was his son ;
 Great Glaucus, father of Bellerophon,
 Who o'er the sons of men in beauty shin'd, 195
 Lov'd for that valour which preserves mankind.
 Then mighty Prætus Argos sceptre sway'd,
 Whose hard commands Bellerophon obey'd.
 With direful jealousy the monarch rag'd,
 And the brave prince in num'rous toils engag'd. 200
 For him, Antæa burn'd with lawless flame.
 And strove to tempt him from the paths of fame ;
 In vain she tempted the relentless youth,
 Endu'd with wisdom, sacred fear, and truth.
 Fir'd at his scorn the queen to Prætus fled, 205
 And begg'd revenge for her insulted bed :
 Incens'd he heard, resolving on his fate ;
 But hospitable laws restrain'd his hate :

v. 193. *Then call'd Ephyre.*] It was the same which was afterwards called Corinth, and had that name in Homer's time, as appears from his catalogue, v. 77.

v. 196. *Lov'd for that valour which preserves mankind.*] This distinction of true valour, which has the good of mankind for its end, in opposition to the valour of tyrants or oppressors, is beautifully hinted by Homer in the epithet *ἡγρευνή*, *amiable valour*. Such as was that of Bellerophon, who freed the land from monsters, and creatures destructive to his species. It is applied to this young hero with particular judgment and propriety, if we consider the innocence and gentleness of his manners appearing from the following story, which every one will observe has a great resemblance with that of Joseph in the scriptures.

To Lycia the devoted youth he sent,
 With tablets seal'd, that told his dire intent. 210
 Now blest by ev'ry pow'r who guards the good,
 The chief arriv'd at Xanthus' silver flood :
 There Lycia's monarch paid him honours due ;
 Nine days he feasted, and nine bulls he slew.
 But when the tenth bright morning orient glow'd, 215
 The faithful youth his monarch's mandate show'd :
 The fatal tablets, 'till that instant seal'd,
 The deathful secret to the king reveal'd.
 First dire Chimæra's conquest was enjoin'd :
 A mingled monster of no mortal kind ; 220
 Behind a dragon's fiery tail was spread ;
 A goat's rough body bore a lion's head ;

v. 216. *The faithful youth his monarch's mandate show'd.*] Plutarch much commends the virtue of Belerophon, who faithfully carried those letters he might so justly suspect of ill consequence to him : the passage is in his discourse of curiosity, and worth transcribing. " A
 " man of curiosity is void of all faith, and it is better to
 " trust letters or any important secrets to servants, than
 " to friends and familiars of an inquisitive temper. Bel-
 " lerophon, when he carried letters that ordered his own
 " destruction, did not unseal them, but forbore touching
 " the king's dispatches with the same continence, as he
 " had refrained from injuring his bed : for curiosity is
 " an incontinence as well as adultery."

v. 219. *First dire Chimæra.*] Chimæra was feigned to have the head of a lion breathing flames, the body of a goat, and the tail of a dragon ; because the mountain of that name in Lycia had a vulcano on its top, and nourished lions ; the middle part afforded pasture for goats, and the bottom was infested with serpents.

Belle-

Her pitchy nostrils flaky flames expire ;
 Her gaping throat emits infernal fire.

This pest he slaughter'd (for he read the skies, 225
 And trusted heav'n's informing prodigies ;)

Then met in arms the Solymæan crew,
 (Fiercest of men) and those the warrior slew.

Next the bold Amazon's whole force defy'd ;
 And conquer'd still, for heav'n was on his side. 230

Nor ended here his toils : his Lycian foes,
 At his return, a treacherous ambush rose,
 With levell'd spears along the winding shore ;
 There fell they breathless, and return'd no more.

At length the monarch with repentant grief 235
 Confess'd the Gods, and God-descended chief ;

Bellerophon destroying these, and rendering the mountain habitable, was said to have conquered Chimæra. He calls this monster Θεῖον γένος, in the manner of the Hebrews, who gave to any thing vast or extraordinary the appellative of Divine. So the Psalmist says, *The mountains of God*, etc.

v. 227. *The Solymæan crew.*] These Solymi were an ancient nation inhabiting the mountainous parts of Asia Minor, between Lycia and Pisidia. Pliny mentions them as the instance of a people so intirely destroyed, that no footsteps of them remained in his time. Some authors both ancient and modern, from a resemblance in sound to the Latin name of Jerusalem, have confounded them with the Jews. Tacitus, speaking of the various opinions concerning the origin of the Jewish nation, has these words : *Clara alii tradunt Judæorum initia ; Solymos carminibus Homeri celebratam gentem, conditæ urbi Hierosolymam nomen e suo fecisse.*

Hist. lib. 6.

His daughter gave, the stranger to detain,
With half the honours of his ample reign.

The Lycians grant a chosen space of ground,
With woods, with vineyards, and with harvests crown'd.

There long the chief his happy lot possess'd, 241

With two brave sons and one fair daughter bless'd,

(Fair ev'n in heav'nly eyes; her fruitful love
Crown'd with Sarpedon's birth th' embrace of Jove:)

But when at last, distracted in his mind, 245

Forsook by heav'n, forsaking human kind,

v. 239. *The Lycians grant a chosen space of ground.*]

It was usual in the ancient times upon any signal piece of service performed by the kings, or great men, to have a portion of land decreed by the public as a reward to them. Thus when Sarpedon in the twelfth book incites Glaucus to behave himself valiantly, he puts him in mind of these possessions granted by his countrymen.

Γλαῦκε, τίη δὴ νῶϊ τετιμήμεθα μάλιστα——etc.

Καὶ Τίμενος νεμόμεθα μέγα Ξανθοιο παρ' ὄχθας,

Καλὸν, φυταλιῆς καὶ ἀρβυρῆς πυροφόροιο.

In the same manner in the ninth book of Virgil, Nisus is promised by Ascanius the fields which were possessed by Latinus, as a reward for the service he undertook.

——*Campi quod rex habet ipse Latinus.*

Chapman has an interpolation in this place to tell us that this field was afterwards called by the Lycians, *The field of wanderings*, from the wanderings and distraction of Bellerophon in the latter part of his life. But they were not those fields that were called Ἀλλήοι, but those upon which he fell from the horse Pegasus, when he endeavoured (as the fable has it) to mount to heaven.

v. 245. *But when at last, etc.*] The same critics,

Wide o'er th' Aleian field he chose to stray,
A long, forlorn, uncomfortable way !

Woes heap'd on woes consum'd his wasted heart ;
His beauteous daughter fell by Phœbe's dart ; 250

His eldest-born by raging Mars was slain,
In combate on the Solymæan plain.

Hippolochus surviv'd ; from him I came ;
The honour'd author of my birth and name ;

By his decree I fought the Trojan town, 255
By his instructions learn to win renown,

who have taxed Homer for being too tedious in this story of Bellerophon, have censured him for omitting to relate the particular offence which had raised the anger of the Gods against a man formerly so highly favoured by them : but this relation coming from the mouth of his grandson, it is with great decorum and propriety he passes over in silence those crimes of his ancestor, which had provoked the divine vengeance against him. Milton has interwoven this story with what Homer here relates of Bellerophon.

*Lest from this flying steed unrein'd (as once
Bellerophon, tho' from a lower clime)
Dismounted on th' Aleian field I fall,
Erroneous there to wander and forlorn.*

Parad. Lost, B. 7.

Tully in his third book of Tusculane questions, having observed that persons oppressed with woe naturally seek solitude, instances this example of Bellerophon, and gives us his translation of two of these lines.

*Qui miser in campos mærens errabat Aleis,
Ipse saum cor edens, hominum vestigia vitans.*

To stand the first in worth as in command,
 To add new honours to my native land,
 Before my eyes my mighty fires to place,
 And emulate the glories of our race.

260

He spoke, and transport fill'd Tydides' heart;
 In earth the gen'rous warrior fix'd his dart,
 'Then friendly, thus, the Lycian prince address'd:
 Welcome, my brave hereditary guest!
 Thus ever let us meet, with kind embrace,
 Nor stain the sacred friendship of our race.
 Know chief, our grandsires have been guests of old;
 Oeneus the strong, Bellerophon the bold:

265

v. 267. *Our grandsires have been guests of old.*] The laws of hospitality were anciently held in great veneration. The friendship contracted hereby was so sacred, that they preferred it to all the bands of consanguinity and alliance, and accounted it obligatory even to the third and fourth generation. We have seen in the foregoing story of Bellerophon, that Prætus, a prince under the supposition of being injured in the highest degree, is yet afraid to revenge himself upon the criminal on this account: he is forced to send him into Lycia rather than be guilty of a breach of this law in his own country. And the king of Lycia having entertained the stranger before he unsealed the letters, puts him upon expeditions abroad, in which he might be destroyed, rather than at his court. We here see Diomed and Glaucus agreeing not to be enemies during the whole course of a war, only because their grandfathers had been mutual guests. And we afterwards find Teucer engaged with the Greeks on this account against the Trojans, though he was himself of Trojan extraction, the nephew of Priam by the mother's side, and cousin-german of Hector, whose life he pursues

Our ancient feat his honour'd presence grac'd,
Where twenty days in genial rites he pass'd. 270

The parting heroes mutual presents left;
A golden goblet was thy grandfire's gift;
Oeneus a belt of matchless work bestow'd,
That rich with Tyrian dye refulgent glow'd.

(This from his pledge I learn'd, which safely stor'd 275
Among my treasures, still adorns my board:

For Tydeus left me young, when Thebe's wall
Beheld the sons of Greece untimely fall.)

Mindful of this, in friendship let us join;
If heav'n our steps to foreign lands incline } 280

My guest in Argos thou, and I in Lycia thine.
Enough of Trojan to this lance shall yield,

In the full harvest of yon' ample field;
Enough of Greeks shall dye thy spear with gore;

But thou and Diomed be foes no more. 285

Now change we arms, and prove to either host
We guard the friendship of the line we boast.

Thus having said, the gallant chiefs alight,
Their hands they join, their mutual faith they plight;

Brave Glaucus then each narrow thought resign'd, 290
(Jove warm'd his bosom and enlarg'd his mind)

with the utmost violence. They preserved in their families the presents which had been made on these occasions, as obliged to transmit to their children the memorials of this right of hospitality. Eustathius.

v. 291. *Jove warm'd his bosom and enlarg'd his mind.*]
The words in the original are ἐξέλετο φρενας, which may equally be interpreted, *he took away his sense, or he ele-*

For Diomed's brass arms, of mean device,
 For which nine oxen paid (a vulgar price)
 He gave his own, of gold divinely wrought,
 A hundred beeves the shining purchase bought. 295

Mean time the guardian of the Trojan state,
 Great Hector, enter'd at the Scæan gate.
 Beneath the beech-tree's consecrated shades,
 The Trojan matrons and the Trojan maids

vated his mind. The former being a reflection upon Glaucus's prudence, for making so unequal an exchange, the latter a praise of the magnanimity and generosity which induced him to it. Porphyry contends for its being understood in this last way, and Eustathius, monsieur and madam Dacier, are of the same opinion. Notwithstanding it is certain that Homer uses the same words in the contrary sense in the seventeenth Iliad, v. 470. of the original, and in the nineteenth, v. 137. And it is an obvious remark, that the interpretation of Porphyry as much dishonours Diomed who proposed this exchange, as it does honour to Glaucus for consenting to it. However, I have followed it, if not as the juster, as the most heroic sense, and as it has the nobler air in poetry.

v. 295. *A hundred beeves.*] I wonder the curious have not remarked from this place, that the proportion of the value of gold to brass in the time of the Trojan war, was but as an hundred to nine; allowing these armours of equal weight: which, as they belonged to men of equal strength, is a reasonable supposition. As to this manner of computing the value of the armour by beeves or oxen, it might be either because the money was anciently stamped with those figures, or, (which is most probable in this place) because in those times they generally purchased by exchange of commodities, as we see by a passage near the end of the seventh book.

Around him flock'd, all press'd with pious care 300

For husbands, brothers, sons, engag'd in war.

He bids the train in long procession go,

And seek the Gods, t' avert th' impending woe.

And now to Priam's stately courts he came,

Rais'd on arch'd columns of stupendous frame ; 305

O'er these a range of marble structure runs,

The rich pavilions of his fifty sons,

In fifty chambers lodg'd : and rooms of state

Oppos'd to those, where Priam's daughters fate :

Twelve domes for them and their lov'd spouses shone, 310

Of equal beauty, and of polish'd stone.

Hither great Hector pass'd, nor pass'd unseen

Of royal Hecuba, his mother queen.

(With her Laodice, whose beauteous face

Surpass'd the nymphs of Troy's illustrious race) 315

Long in a strict embrace she held her son,

And press'd his hand, and tender thus begun.

O Hector ! say, what great occasion calls

My son from fight, when Greece surrounds our walls ?

Com'st thou to supplicate th' almighty pow'r, 320

With lifted hands from Ilion's lofty tow'r ?

Stay, 'till I bring the cup with Bacchus crown'd

In Jove's high name, to sprinkle on the ground,

And pay due vows to all the Gods around.

Then with a plenteous draught refresh thy soul, 325

And draw new spirits from the gen'rous bowl ;

Spent as thou art with long laborious fight,

The brave defender of thy country's right,

Far hence be Bacchus' gifts (the chief rejoin'd)
 Inflaming wine, pernicious to mankind,
 Unnerves the limbs, and dulls the noble mind,
 Let chiefs abstain, and spare the sacred juice
 To sprinkle to the Gods, its better use.
 By me that holy office were prophan'd;
 Ill fits it me, with human gore distain'd;

} 330

335

v. 329. *Far hence be Bacchus' gifts — Inflaming wine.*] This maxim of Hector's, concerning wine, has a great deal of truth in it. It is a vulgar mistake to imagine the use of wine either raises the spirits, or increases strength. The best physicians agree with Homer in this point; whatever our modern soldiers may object to this old heroic regimen. One may take notice that Sampson as well as Hector was a water-drinker; for he was a Nazarite by vow, and as such was forbid the use of wine. To which Milton alludes in his Sampson Agonistes :

*Where-ever fountain or fresh current flow'd
 Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure,
 With touch æthereal of heav'n's fiery rod,
 I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying
 Thirst, and refresh'd; nor envy'd them the grape,
 Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.*

v. 335. *Ill fits it me, with human gore distain'd, etc.*] The custom which prohibits persons polluted with blood to perform any offices of divine worship before they were purified, is so ancient and universal, that it may in some sort be esteemed a precept of natural religion, tending to inspire an uncommon dread and religious horror of bloodshed. There is a fine passage in Euripides, where Iphigenia argues how impossible it is that human sacrifices should be acceptable to the Gods, since

To the pure skies these horrid hands to raise,

Or offer heav'n's great fire polluted praise.

You, with your matrons, go ! a spotless train,

And burn rich odours in Minerva's fane.

The largest mantle your full wardrobes hold, 340

Most priz'd for art, and labour'd o'er with gold,

Before the goddess' honour'd knees be spread,

And twelve young heifers to her altar led.

So may the pow'r, atton'd by fervent pray'r,

Our wives, our infants, and our city spare, 345

And far avert Tydides' wasteful ire,

Who mows whole troops, and makes all Troy retire.

Be this, O mother, your religious care ;

I go to rouze soft Paris to the war ;

If yet, not lost to all the sense of shame, 350

The recreant warrior hear the voice of fame.

Oh would kind earth the hateful wretch embrace,

That pest of Troy, that ruin of our race !

Deep to the dark abyss might he descend,

Troy yet should flourish, and my sorrows end. 355

This heard she gave command ; and summon'd came

Each noble matron, and illustrious dame,

they do not permit any defiled with blood, or even polluted with the touch of a dead body, to come near their altars. Iphig. in Tauris, v. 380. Virgil makes his Æneas say the same thing which Hector does here.

Me bello e tanto digressum et cæde recenti

Attrectare nefas, donec me flumine vivo

Abluero. —————

The Phrygian queen to her rich wardrobe went,
Where treasur'd odours breath'd a costly scent.

There lay the vestures, of no vulgar art, 360

Sidonian maids embroider'd ev'ry part,

Whom from soft Sidon youthful Paris bore,

With Helen touching on the Tyrian shore.

Here as the queen revolv'd with careful eyes

The various textures and the various dyes, 365

She chose a veil that shone superior far,

And glow'd refulgent as the morning star.

Herself with this the long procession leads ;

The train majestically slow proceeds.

Soon as to Ilion's topmost tow'r they come, 370

And awful reach'd the high Palladian dome,

Antenor's consort, fair Theano, waits

As Pallas' priestesses, and unbars the gates.

With hands uplifted and imploring eyes,

They fill the dome with supplicating cries. 375

v. 361. *Sidonian maids.*] Dictys Cretensis, *lib. i.* acquaints us that Paris returned not directly to Troy after the rape of Helen, but fetched a compass, probably to avoid pursuit. He touched at Sidon, where he surprised the king of Phœnicia by night, and carried off many of his treasures and captives, among which probably were these Sidonian women. The author of the ancient poem of the Cypriacs says, he sailed from Sparta to Troy in the space of three days: from which passage Herodotus concludes that poem was not Homer's. We find in the scriptures, that Tyre and Sidon were famous for works in gold, embroidery, etc. and for whatever regarded magnificence and luxury.

v. 374. *With hands uplifted.*] The only gesture de-

The priestess then the shining veil displays,
Plac'd on Minerva's knees, and thus she prays.

Oh awful goddess! ever-dreadful maid,
Troy's strong defence, unconquer'd Pallas, aid!

scribed by Homer, as used by the ancients in the invocation of the Gods, is the lifting up of their hands to heaven. Virgil frequently alludes to this practice; particularly in the second book there is a passage, the beauty of which is much raised by this consideration.

*Ecce trahebatur passis Priameia virgo
Grinibus, a templo, Cassandra, adytisque Minervæ,
Ad cælum tendens ardentia lumina frustra,
Lumina! nam teneras arcebant vincula palmas.*

v. 378. *Oh awful goddess, etc.*] This procession of the Trojan matrons to the temple of Minerva, with their offerings, and the ceremonies; though it be a passage some moderns have criticised upon, seems to have particularly pleased Virgil. For he has not only introduced it among the figures in the picture at Carthage, *Æn.* i. v. 483.

*Interea ad templum non æquæ Palladis ibant
Grinibus Iliades passis, peplumque ferebant
Suppliciter tristes; et tunsæ pectora palmis.
Diva solo fixos oculos averſa tenebat.*

But he has again copied it in the eleventh book, where the Latian dames make the same procession upon the approach of *Æneas* to their city. The prayer to the goddess is translated almost word for word, v. 483.

*Armipotens belli præses, Tritonia virgo
Frange manu telum Phrygii prædonis, et ipsum
Pronum sterne solo portisque effunde sub altis.*

Break thou Tydides' spear, and let him fall 380

Prone on the dust before the Trojan wall.

So twelve young heifers, guiltless of the yoke,

Shall fill thy temple with a grateful smoke,

But thou, atton'd by penitence and pray'r,

Ourselves, our infants, and our city spare ! 485

So pray'd the priestess in her holy fane ;

So vow'd the matrons, but they vow'd in vain.

While these appear before the pow'r with pray'rs,
Hector to Paris' lofty dome repairs.

Himself the mansion rais'd, from ev'ry part 390

Assembling architects of matchless art.

This prayer in the Latin poet seems introduced with less propriety, since Pallas appears no where interested in the conduct of affairs through the whole *Æneid*. The first line of the Greek here is translated more literally than the former versions ; ἐρυσίπολις, δῖα θεῶν. I take the first epithet to allude to Minerva's being the particular protectress of Troy by means of the Palladium, and not (as Mr. Hobbes understands it) the protectress of all cities in general.

v. 387. *But they vow'd in vain.*] For Helenus only ordered that prayers should be made to Minerva to drive Diomed from before the walls. But Theano prays that Diomed may perish, and perish flying, which is included in his falling forward. Madam Dacier is so free as to observe here, that women are seldom moderate in the prayers they make against their enemies, and therefore are seldom heard.

v. 390. *Himself the mansion rais'd.*] I must own myself not so great an enemy to Paris as some of the commentators. His blind passion is the unfortunate occasion of the ruin of his country, and he has the ill fate to have

Near Priam's court and Hector's palace stands
The pompous structure, and the town commands.
A spear the hero bore of wondrous strength,
Of full ten cubits was the lance's length,

395

have all his fine qualities swallowed up in that. And indeed I cannot say he endeavours much to be a better man than his nature made him. But as to his parts and turn of mind, I see nothing that is either weak or wicked, the general manners of those times considered. On the contrary, a gentle, soul patient of good advice, though indolent enough to forget it; and liable only to that frailty of love, which methinks might in his case as well as Helen's be charged upon the stars, and the Gods. So very amorous a constitution, and so incomparable a beauty to provoke it, might be temptation enough even to a wise man, and in some degree make him, deserve compassion, if not pardon. It is remarkable, that Homer does not paint him and Helen (as some other poets would have done) like monsters, odious to Gods and men, but allows their characters such esteemable qualifications, as could consist, and in truth generally do, with tender frailties. He gives Paris several polite accomplishments, and in particular a turn to those sciences that are the result of a fine imagination. He makes him have a taste and addiction to curious works of all sorts, which caused him to transport Sidonian artists to Troy, and employ himself at home in adorning and finishing his armour: and now we are told that he assembled the most skilful builders from all parts of the country, to render his palace a compleat piece of Architecture. This, together with what Homer has said elsewhere of his skill in the harp, which in those days included both Music and Poetry, may I think establish him a Bell Esprit and a fine genius.

The steely point with golden ringlets join'd,
 Before him brandish'd, at each motion shin'd.
 Thus entring in the glitt'ring rooms he found
 His brother-chief, whose useleſs arms lay round,
 His eyes delighting with their ſplendid ſhow, 400
 Bright'ning the ſhield, and poliſhing the bow.
 Beſide him Helen with her virgins ſtands,
 Guides their rich labours, and inſtructs their hands.

Him thus unactive, with an ardent look
 The prince beheld, and high-reſenting ſpoke. 405
 Thy hate to Troy, is this the time to ſhow?
 (Oh wretch ill-fated, and thy country's foe !)

v. 406 *Thy hate to Troy, etc.*] All the commentators obſerve this ſpeech of Hector to be a piece of artifice; he ſeems to imagine that the retirement of Paris proceeds only from his reſentment againſt the Trojans, and not from his indolence, luxury, or any other cauſe. Plutarch thus diſcourſes upon it. “As a diſcreet phyſician rather chuſes to cure his patient by diet or reſt, than by caſtoreum or ſcammony, ſo a good friend, a good maſter, or a good father, are always better pleaſed to make uſe of commendation than reproof, for the reformation of manners: for nothing ſo much aſſiſts a man who reprehends with frankneſs and liberty, nothing renders him leſs offensive, or better promotes his good deſign, than to reprove with calmneſs, affection, and temper. He ought not therefore to urge them too ſeverely if they deny the fact, nor foreſtal their juſtification of themſelves, but rather try to help them out, and furniſh them artiſially with honeſt and colourable pretences to excuſe them; and though he ſees that their fault proceeded from a more ſhameful cauſe, he ſhould yet impute it to ſomething leſs criminal. Thus Hector

Paris and Greece against us both conspire.

Thy close resentment, and their vengeful ire.

For thee great Ilion's guardian heroes fall, 410

Till heaps of dead alone defend her wall;

For thee the soldier bleeds, the matron mourns,

And wasteful war in all its fury burns.

Ungrateful man! deserves not this thy care,

Our troops to hearten, and our toils to share? 415

Rise, or behold the conqu'ring flames ascend,

And all the Phrygian glories at an end.

Brother, 'tis just (reply'd the beauteous youth)

Thy free remonstrance proves thy worth and truth:

Yet charge my absence less, oh gen'rous chief! 420

On hate to Troy than conscious shame and grief:

"deals with Paris, when he tells him, *This is not the*

"*time to manifest your anger against the Trojans*: as if

"his retreat from the battle had not been absolutely a

"flight, but merely the effect of resentment and indig-

"nation." Plut. *Of knowing a flatterer from a friend.*

v. 418. *Brother, 'tis just, etc.*] Paris readily lays hold of the pretext Hector had furnished him with, and confesses he has partly touched upon the true reason of his retreat, but that it was also partly occasioned by the concern he felt at the victory of his rival. Next he professes his readiness for the fight: but nothing can be a finer trait (if we consider his character) than what Homer puts into his mouth just in this place, that *he is now exhorted to it by Helen*: which shews that not the danger of his country and parents, neither private shame, nor public hatred, could so much prevail upon him, as the commands of his mistress, to go and recover his honour.

Here, hid from human eyes, thy brother fate,
And mourn'd in secret, his, and Ilion's fate.

'Tis now enough : now glory spreads her charms,
And beauteous Helen calls her chief to arms. 425

Conquest to-day my happier sword may bless,

× 'Tis man's to fight, but heav'n's to give success.

But while I arm, contain thy ardent mind ;

Or go, and Paris shall not lag behind.

He said, nor answer'd Priam's warlike son : 430

When Helen thus with lowly grace begun.

Oh gen'rous brother ! if the guilty dame

That caus'd these woes, deserves a sister's name !

Wou'd heav'n, ere all these dreadful deeds were done

The day, that shou'd me to the golden sun, 435

Had seen my death ! why did not whirlwinds bear

The fatal infant to the fowls of air ?

Why sunk I not beneath thewhelming tyde,

And 'midst the roarings of the waters dy'd ?

Heav'n fill'd up all my ills, and I accurst 440

Bore all, and Paris of those ills the worst.

v. 432. *Helen's speech.*] The repentance of Helena (which we have before observed Homer never loses an opportunity of manifesting) is finely touched again here. Upon the whole, we see the Gods are always concerned in what befalls an unfortunate beauty : her stars foredoomed all the mischief, and heaven was to blame in suffering her to live : then she fairly gets quit of the infamy of her lover, and shews she has higher sentiments of honour than he. How very natural is all this in the like characters to this day ?

Helen at least a braver spouse might claim,
 Warm'd with some virtue, some regard of fame !
 Now tir'd with toils, thy fainting limbs recline,
 With toils, sustain'd for Paris' sake and mine : 445

The Gods have link'd our miserable doom,
 Our present woe, and infamy to come :

Wide shall it spread, and last thro' ages long,
 Example sad ! and theme of future song.

The chief reply'd : this time forbids to rest : 450

The Trojan bands, by hostile fury prest,
 Demand their Hector, and his arm require ;
 The combate urges, and my soul's on fire,
 Urge thou thy knight to march where glory calls,
 And timely join me, ere I leave the walls. 455

Ere yet I mingle in the direful fray,
 My wife, my infant, claim a moment's stay ;
 This day (perhaps the last that sees me here)
 Demands a parting word, a tender tear :

This day, some God who hates our Trojan land 460
 May vanquish Hector by a Grecian hand.

He said, and pass'd with sad presaging heart
 To seek his spouse, his soul's far dearer part ;

v. 462. *The episode of Hector and Andromache.*]

Homer undoubtedly shines most upon the great subjects, in raising our admiration or terror : pity, and the softer passions, are not so much of the nature of his poem, which is formed upon anger and the violence of ambition. But we have cause to think his genius was no less capable of touching the heart with tenderness, than of firing it with glory, from the few sketches he has left

At home he fought her, but he fought in vain :

She, with one maid of all her menial train,

465

us of his excellence in that way too. In the present episode of the parting of Hector and Andromache, he has assembled all that love, grief, and compassion could inspire. The greatest censurers of Homer have acknowledged themselves charmed with this part; even monsieur Perault translated it into French verse as a kind of penitential sacrifice for the sacrileges he had committed against this author.

This episode tends very much to raise the character of Hector, and endear him to every reader. This hero, though doubtful if he should ever see Troy again, yet goes not to his wife and child, 'till after he has taken care for the sacrifice, exhorted Paris to the fight, and discharged every duty to the Gods, and to his country; his love of which, as we formerly remarked, makes his chief character. What a beautiful contrast has Homer made between the manners of Paris and those of Hector, as he here shews them one after the other in this domestic light, and in their regards to the fair sex? what a difference between the characters and behaviour of Helen and of Andromache? and what an amiable picture of conjugal love, opposed to that of unlawful passion?

I must not forget that Mr. Dryden has formerly translated this admirable episode, and with so much success, as to leave me at least no hopes of improving or equalling it. The utmost I can pretend is to have avoided a few modern phrases and deviations from the original, which have escaped that great man. I am unwilling to remark upon an author to whom every English poet owes so much; and shall therefore only take notice of a criticism of his, which I shall be obliged to answer in its place, as it is an accusation of Homer himself.

Had thence retir'd; and with her second joy,
 The young Astyanax, the hope of Troy.
 Pensive she stood on Ilion's tow'ry height,
 Beheld the war, and sicken'd at the sight;
 There her sad eyes in vain her lord explore, 470
 Or weep the wounds her bleeding country bore.

But he who found not whom his soul desir'd,
 Whose virtue charm'd him as her beauty fir'd,
 Stood in the gates, and ask'd what way she bent
 Her parting step? If to the fane she went, 475
 Where late the mourning matrons made resort;
 Or sought her sisters in the Trojan court?
 Not to the court, (reply'd th' attendant train)
 Nor mix'd with matrons to Minerva's fane:
 To Ilion's steepy tow'r she bent her way, 480
 To mark the fortunes of the doubtful day.
 Troy fled, she heard, before the Grecian sword;
 She heard, and trembled for her absent lord:
 Distracted with surprize, she seem'd to fly,
 Fear on her cheek, and sorrow in her eye. 485

v. 468. *Pensive she stood on Ilion's tow'ry height.*] It is a fine imagination to represent the tenderness of Andromache for Hector, by her standing upon the tower of Troy, and watching all his motions in the field; even the religious procession to Minerva's temple could not draw her from this place, at a time when she thought her husband in danger.

v. 473. *Whose virtue charm'd him, etc.*] Homer in this verse particularizes the virtue of Andromache in the epithet ἀμύμονα, *blameless*, or *without a fault*. I have used it literally in another part of this episode.

The nurse attended with her infant boy,
The young Astyanax, the hope of Troy.

Hector, this heard, return'd without delay;
Swift thro' the town he trode his former way,
Thro' streets of palaces, and walks of state; 490
And met the mourner at the Scæan gate.

With haste to meet him sprung the joyful fair,
His blameless wife, Action's wealthy heir:

(Cilician Thebe great Action sway'd,
And Hippoplacus' wide-extended shade) 495

The nurse stood near, in whose embraces prest
His only hope hung smiling at her breast,
Whom each soft charm and early grace adorn,
Fair as the new-born star that gilds the morn.

To this lov'd infant Hector gave the name 500
Scamandrius, from Scamander's honour'd stream;

v. 488. *Hector, this heard, return'd.*] Hector does not stay to seek his wife on the tower of Ilion, but hastens where the business of the field calls him. Homer is never wanting in point of honour and decency, and while he constantly obeys the strictest rules, finds a way to make them contribute to the beauty of his poem. Here for instance he has managed it so, that this observance of Hector's is the cause of a very pleasing surprize to the reader; for at first he is not a little disappointed to find that Hector does not meet Andromache, and is no less pleased afterwards to see them encounter by chance, which gives him a satisfaction he thought he had lost. Dacier.

v. 501. *Scamandrius from Scamander's honour'd stream, etc.*] This manner of giving proper names to children, derived from any place, accident, or quality

Astyanax the Trojans call'd the boy,
From his great father, the defence of Troy.
Silent the warrior smil'd, and pleas'd resign'd
To tender passions all his mighty mind : 505
His beauteous princess cast a mournful look,
Hung on his hand, and then dejected spoke ;
Her bosom labour'd with a boding sigh,
And the big tear stood trembling in her eye.

Too daring prince ! ah whither dost thou run ? 510
Ah too forgetful of thy wife and son !
And think'st thou not how wretched we shall be,
A widow I, an helpless orphan he !
For sure such courage length of life denies,
And thou must fall, thy virtue's sacrifice. 515
Greece in her single heroes strove in vain ;
Now hosts oppose thee, and thou must be slain !
Oh grant me, Gods ! ere Hector meets his doom,
All I can ask of heav'n, an early tomb !
So shall my days in one sad tenour run, 520
And end with sorrows as they first begun.
No parent now remains, my griefs to share,
No father's aid, no mother's tender care.

belonging to them or their parents, is very ancient, and was customary among the Hebrews. The Trojans called the son of Hector, Astyanax, because (as it is said here and at the end of the twenty-second book) *his father defended the city*. There are many instances of the same kind in the thirtieth chapter of Genesis, where the names given to Jacob's children, and the reasons of those names, are enumerated.

The fierce Achilles wrapt our walls in fire,
Laid Thebe waste, and slew my warlike fire!

525

v. 524. *The fierce Achilles*, etc.] Mr. Dryden, in the preface to the third volume of Miscellany Poems, has past a judgment upon part of this speech, which is altogether unworthy of him. “Andromache (says he) “in the midst of her concernment and fright for Hector “runs off her bias, to tell him a story of her pedigree, “and of the lamentable death of her father, her mother, “and her seven brothers. The devil was in Hector, “if he knew not all this matter, as well as she who told “it him; for she had been his bed-fellow for many years “together: and if he knew it, then it must be confessed, that Homer, in this long digression, has rather “given us his own character, than that of the fair lady “whom he paints. His dear friends the commentators, who never fail him at a pinch, will needs excuse “him by making the present sorrow of Andromache, “to occasion the remembrance of all the past: but others think that she had enough to do with that grief “which now oppressed her, without running for assistance to her family.” But may not it be answered, That nothing was more natural in Andromache, than to recollect her past calamities, in order to represent her present distress to Hector in a strong light, and shew her utter desertion if he should perish? What could more effectually work upon a generous and tender mind, like that of Hector? What could therefore be more proper to each of their characters? If Hector be induced to refrain from the field, it proceeds from compassion to Andromache: If Andromache endeavour to persuade him, it proceeds from her fear for the life of Hector. Homer had yet a farther view in this recapitulation; it tends to raise his chief hero Achilles, and acquaints us with those great achievements of his which preceded the opening of the poem. Since there was a necessity that this hero should be absent from the action during a great

His fate compassion in the victor bred ;
 Stern as he was, he yet rever'd the dead,
 His radiant arms preserv'd from hostile spoil,
 And laid him decent on the fun'ral pile ;
 Then rais'd a mountain where his bones were burn'd, 530
 The mountain nymphs the rural tomb adorn'd,

part of the Iliad, the poet has shewn his art in nothing more, than in the methods he takes from time to time to keep up our great idea of him, and to awaken our expectation of what he is to perform in the progress of the work. His greatest enemies cannot upbraid, or complain of him, but at the same time they confess his glory, and describe his victories. When Apollo encourages the Trojans to fight, it is by telling them Achilles fights no more. When Juno animates the Greeks, it is by putting them in mind that they have to do with enemies who durst not appear out of their walls while Achilles engaged. When Andromache trembles for Hector, it is with remembrance of the resistless force of Achilles. And when Agamemnon would bribe him to a reconciliation, it is partly with those very treasures and spoils which had been won by Achilles himself.

v. 528. *His arms preserv'd from hostile spoil.*] This circumstance of Aetion's being burned with his arms, will not appear trivial in this relation, when we reflect with what eager passion these ancient heroes fought to spoil and carry off the armour of a vanquished enemy ; and therefore this action of Achilles is mentioned as an instance of uncommon favour and generosity. Thus Æneas in Virgil having slain Lausus, and being moved with compassion for this unhappy youth, gives him a promise of the like favour.

*Arma, quibus letatus, habe tua : teque parentum
 Manibus, et cineri, si qua est ea cura, remitto.*

Jove's sylvan daughters bade their elms bestow
A barren shade, and in his honour grow.

By the same arm my sev'n brave brothers fell,
In one sad day beheld the gates of hell ; 535
While the fat herds and snowy flocks they fed,
Amid their fields the hapless heroes bled !
My mother liv'd to bear the victor's bands,
The queen of Hippoplacia's sylvan lands :
Redeem'd too late, she scarce beheld again 540
Her pleasing empire and her native plain,
When ah ! oppress'd by life-consuming woe,
She fell a victim to Diana's bow.

Yet while my Hector still survives, I see
My father, mother, brethren, all, in thee. 545
Alas ! my parents, brothers, kindred, all,
Once more will perish if my Hector fall.
Thy wife, thy infant, in thy danger share :
Oh prove a husband's and a father's care !

v. 532. *Jove's sylvan daughters bade their elms bestow a barren shade, etc.*] It was the custom to plant about tombs only such trees as elms, aldars, &c. that bear no fruit, as being most suitable to the dead. This passage alludes to that piece of antiquity.

v. 543. *A victim to Diana's bow.*] The Greeks ascribed all sudden deaths of women to Diana. So Ulysses, in Odyss. 11. asks Anticlea, among the shades, if she died by the darts of Diana ? And in the present book, Laodame, the daughter of Bellerophon, is said to have perished young by the arrows of this goddess. Or perhaps it may allude to some disease fatal to women, such as Macrobius speaks of, Sat. 1. 17. *Fæminas certis afflictiis morbis Σελήνοβλήτης καὶ Ἀρτεμιδοβλήτοῦς vocant.*

That

That quarter most the skilful Greeks annoy, 550
 Where yon' wild fig-trees join the wall of Troy :
 Thou, from this tow'r defend th' important post ;
 There Agamemnon points his dreadful host,
 That pass Tydides, Ajax, strive to gain,
 And there the vengeful Spartan fires his train. 555
 Thrice our bold foes the fierce attack have giv'n,
 Or led by hopes, or dictated from heav'n.
 Let others in the field their arms employ,
 But stay my Hector here, and guard his Troy.

The chief reply'd : that post shall be my care, 560
 Nor that alone, but all the works of war.
 How would the sons of Troy, in arms renown'd,
 And Troy's proud dames whose garments sweep the
 Attaint the lustre of my former name, [ground,
 Should Hector basely quit the field of fame ! 565
 My early youth was bred to martial pains,
 My soul impels me to th' embattel'd plains :

v. 550. *That quarter most*—*Where yon' wild fig-trees.*] The artifice Andromache here uses to detain Hector in Troy, is very beautifully imagined. She takes occasion from the three attacks that had been made by the enemy upon this place, to give him an honourable pretence for staying at that rampart to defend it. If we consider that those attempts must have been known to all in the city, we shall not think she talks like a soldier, but like a woman, who naturally enough makes use of any incident that offers, to persuade her lover to what she desires. The ignorance too which she expresses, of the reasons that moved the Greeks to attack this particular place, was what I doubt not Homer intended to reconcile it the more to a female character.

Let me be foremost to defend the throne,
And guard my father's glories and my own.

Yet come it will, the day decreed by fates ; 570
(How my heart trembles while my tongue relates :)

The day when thou, imperial Troy ! must bend,
And see thy warriors fall, thy glories end.

And yet no dire presage so wounds my mind,
My mother's death, the ruin of my kind 575

Not Priam's hoary hairs defil'd with gore,

Not all my brothers gasping on the shore ;

As thine Andromache ! thy griefs I dread ;

I see thee trembling, weeping, captive led !

In Argive looms our battles to design, 580

And woes, of which so large a part was thine !

To bear the victor's hard commands, or bring

The weight of waters from Hyperia's spring.

There, while you groan beneath the load of life,

They cry, Behold the mighty Hector's wife ! 585

Some haughty Greek, who lives thy tears to see,

Embitters all thy woes, by naming me.

The thoughts of glory past, and present shame,

A thousand griefs, shall waken at the name !

v. 583. *Hyperia's spring.*] Drawing water was the office of the meanest slaves. This appears by the holy scripture, where the Gibeonites who had deceived Joshua are made slaves, and subjected to draw water. Joshua pronounces the curse against them in these words : *Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood, and drawers of water.* Josh. ch. 9. v. 23. Dacier.

May I lie cold before that dreadful day, 590

Press'd with a load of monumental clay !

Thy Hector, wrapt in everlasting sleep,

Shall neither hear thee sigh, nor see thee weep.

Thus having spoke, th' illustrious chief of Troy

Stretch'd his fond arms to clasp the lovely boy. 595

v. 595. *Stretch'd his fond arms.*] There never was a finer piece of painting than this. Hector extends his arms to embrace his child ; the child, affrighted at the glittering of his helmet and the shaking of the plume, shrinks backward to the breast of his nurse ; Hector unbraces his helmet, lays it on the ground, takes the infant in his arms, lifts him towards heaven, and offers a prayer for him to the gods ; then returns him to the mother Andromache, who receives him with a smile of pleasure, but at the same instant the fears for her husband make her burst into tears. All these are but small circumstances, but so artfully chosen, that every reader immediately feels the force of them, and represents the whole in the utmost liveliness to his imagination. This alone might be a confutation of that false criticism some have fallen into, who affirm that a poet ought only to collect the great and noble particulars in his paintings. But it is in the images of things as in the characters of persons ; where a small action, or even a small circumstance of an action, lets us more into the knowledge and comprehension of them, than the material and principal parts themselves. As we find this in a history, so we do in a picture, where sometimes a small motion or turn of a finger will express the character and action of the figure more than all the other parts of the design. Longinus indeed blames an author's insisting too much on trivial circumstances ; but in the same place extolls Homer as “ the poet who best knew how to make use of “ important and beautiful circumstances, and to avoid

The babe clung crying to his nurse's breast,
 Scar'd at the dazling helm, and nodding crest.
 With secret pleasure each fond parent smil'd,
 And Hector hasted to relieve his child,
 The glitt'ring terrors from his brows unbound; 600
 And plac'd the beaming helmet on the ground.
 Then kiss'd the child, and lifting high in air,
 Thus to the gods preferr'd a father's pray'r.

O thou, whose glory fills th'ætherial throne,
 And all ye deathless pow'rs! protect my son! 605

“ the mean and superfluous ones,” There is a vast difference betwixt a small circumstance and a trivial one, and the smallest become important if they are well chosen, and not confused.

v. 604. *Hector's prayer for his son.*] It may be asked how Hector's prayer, that his son might protect the Trojans, could be consistent with what he had said just before, that he certainly knew Troy and his parents would perish. We ought to reflect that this is only a prayer: Hector, in the excess of a tender emotion for his son, intreats the gods to preserve Troy, and permit Astyanax to rule there. It is at all times allowable to beseech heaven to appease its anger, and change its decrees; and we are taught that prayers can alter destiny. Dacier. Besides, it cannot be inferred from hence, that Hector had any divine foreknowledge of his own fate, and the approaching ruin of his country; since in many following passages we find him possessed with strong hopes and firm assurances to raise the siege, by the flight or destruction of the Greeks. So that these forebodings of his fate were only the apprehensions and misgivings of a soul dejected with sorrow and compassion, by considering the great dangers to which he saw all that was dear to him exposed.

Grant him, like me, to purchase just renown,
 To guard the Trojans, to defend the crown,
 Against his country's foes the war to wage,
 And rise the Hector of the future age !
 So when triumphant from successful toils, 610
 Of heroes slain he bears the reeking spoils,
 Whole hosts may hail him with deserv'd acclaim,
 And say, This chief transcends his father's fame :
 While pleas'd amidst the gen'ral shouts of Troy,
 His mother's conscious heart o'erflows with joy. 615

v. 613. *Transcends his father's fame.*] The commendation Hector here gives himself, is not only agreeable to the openness of a brave man, but very becoming on such a solemn occasion; and a natural effect from the testimony of his own heart to his honour; at this time especially, when he knew not but he was speaking his last words. Virgil has not scrupled it, in what he makes Æneas say to Ascanius at his parting for the battle.

*Et pater Æneas et avunculus excitet Hector,
 Disce puer virtutem ex me, verumque laborem,
 Fortunam ex aliis.——* Æn. 12.

I believe he had this of Homer in his eye, though the pathetical mention of fortune in the last line seems an imitation of that prayer of Sophocles, copied also from hence, where Ajax wishes his son may be *like him in all things but in his misfortunes*.

v. 615. *His mother's conscious heart.*] Though the chief beauty of this prayer consists in the paternal piety shewn by Hector, yet it wants not a fine stroke at the end, to continue him in the character of a tender lover of his wife, when he makes one of the motives of his wish, to be the joy she shall receive on hearing her son applauded.

He spoke, and fondly gazing on her charms,
 Restor'd the pleasing burden to her arms;
 Soft on her fragrant breast the babe she laid,
 Hush'd to repose, and with a smile survey'd.
 The troubled pleasure soon chastiz'd by fear, 620
 She mingled with the smile a tender tear.
 The soften'd chief with kind compassion view'd,
 And dry'd the falling drops, and thus pursu'd.

Andromache ! my soul's far better part,
 Why with untimely sorrows heaves thy heart ? 625
 No hostile hand can antedate my doom,
 'Till fate condemns me to the silent tomb.
 Fix'd is the term to all the race of earth,
 And such the hard condition of our birth.
 No force can then resist, no flight can save, 630
 All sink alike, the fearful and the brave.
 No more——but hasten to thy tasks at home,
 There guide the spindle, and direct the loom,
 My glory summons to the martial scene,
 The field of combat is the sphere for men. 635

v. 628. *Fix'd is the term.*] The reason which Hector here urges to allay the affliction of his wife, is grounded on a very ancient and common opinion, that the fatal period of life is appointed to all men at the time of their birth ; which as no precaution can avoid, so no danger can hasten. This sentiment is as proper to give comfort to the distressed, as to inspire courage to the desponding ; since nothing is so fit to quiet and strengthen our minds in times of difficulty, as a firm assurance that our lives are exposed to no real hazards, in the greatest appearances of danger.

Where heroes war, the foremost place I claim,
The first in danger, as the first in fame.

Thus having said, the glorious chief resumes
His tow'ry helmet, black with shading plumes,
His princess parts with a prophetic sigh, 640
Unwilling parts, and oft reverts her eye,
That stream'd at every look : then moving slow,
Sought her own palace, and indulg'd her woe.
There, while her tears deplor'd the godlike man,
Thro' all her train the soft infection ran, 645
The pious maids their mingled sorrows shed,
And mourn the living Hector, as the dead.
But now, no longer deaf to honour's call,
Forth issues Paris from the palace wall.
In brazen arms that cast a gleamy ray, 650
Swift thro' the town the warrior bends his way.
The wanton courser thus, with reins unbound,
Breaks from his stall, and beats the trembling ground ;

v. 649. *Forth issues Paris.*] Paris, stung by the reproaches of Hector, goes to the battle. It is a just remark of Eustathius, that all the reproofs and remonstrances in Homer have constantly their effect. The poet by this shews the great use of reprehensions when properly applied, and finely intimates that every worthy mind will be the better for them.

v. 652. *The wanton courser thus, etc.*] This beautiful comparison being translated by Virgil in the eleventh Ænied, I shall transcribe the originals, that the reader may have the pleasure of comparing them.

Ὡς δ' ὅτε τις σατὸς ἵππος ἀκοήσας ἐπὶ φάτῃ,
Δισκὸν ἀπορρήξας θείει πεδίοιο κραίνων,

Pamper'd and proud, he seeks the wonted tides,
 And laves, in height of blood, his shining sides ; 655
 His head now freed, he tosses to the skies ;
 His mane dishevel'd o'er his shoulders flies ;
 He snuffs the females in the distant plain,
 And springs, exulting, to his fields again.
 With equal triumph, sprightly, bold and gay, 660
 In arms refulgent as the God of day,
 The son of Priam, glorying in his might,
 Rush'd forth with Hector to the fields of fight.

Εἰωθὼς λέεσθαι ἐν ῥέεϊος ποταμοῖο,
 Κυδιόων, ὑψὺ δὲ κάρη ἔχει, ἀμφὶ δὲ χαῖται
 Ὡμοῖς αἰσπονται· ὁ δ' ἀγλαΐῃφι πεποιθὼς,
 Πίμφα ἐ γένα φέρει μετὰ τ' ἥθεα καὶ νομὸν ἵππων.

*Qualis ubi abruptis fugit præsepia vinculis
 Tandem liber equus, campoque potitus aperto,
 Aut ille in pastus armentaque tendit equarum:
 Aut assuetus aquæ perfundi flumine noto
 Emicat, arrectisque fremit cervicibus alte
 Luxurians : luduntque jubæ per colla, per armos.*

Though nothing can be translated better than this is by Virgil, yet in Homer the simile seems more perfect, and the place more proper. Paris had been indulging his ease within the walls of his palace, as the horse in his stable, which was not the case of Turnus. The beauty and wantonness of the steed agrees more exactly with the character of Paris than with the other: and the insinuation of his love of the mares has yet a nearer resemblance. The languishing flow of that verse,

Εἰωθὼς λέεσθαι ἐν ῥέεϊος ποταμοῖο.

finely corresponds with the ease and luxuriancy of the pampered courser bathing in the flood; a beauty which

And now the warriors passing on the way,
 The graceful Paris first excus'd his stay. 665
 To whom the noble Hector thus reply'd :
 O chief ! in blood, and now in arms, ally'd !
 Thy pow'r in war with justice none contest ;
 Known is thy courage, and thy strength confess.

Scaliger did not consider, when he criticised particularly upon that line. Tasso has also imitated this simile, Cant. 9.

*Come destrier, che de la regie stalle
 Ove a l' uso de l' arme si reſerba,
 Fugge, e libero alfin per largo calle
 Va tra gl' armenti, o al fiume uſato, o a l' erba ;
 Scherzau ſu 'l collo i crini, e ſu le ſpalle,
 Si ſcote la ſervice alta e ſuperba ;
 Suonano i pie nel coſſo, e par, ch' auvampi,
 Di ſonori nitriti empiendo i campi.*

v. 665. *Paris excus'd his stay.*] Here, in the original, is a ſhort ſpeech of Paris containing only theſe words : *Brother, I have detained you too long, and ſhould have come ſooner, as you deſired me.* This, and ſome few others of the ſame nature in the Iliad, the tranſlator has ventured to omit, expreſſing only the ſenſe of them. A living author (whom future times will quote, and therefore I ſhall not ſcruple to do it) ſays, that theſe ſhort ſpeeches, though they may be natural in other languages, cannot appear ſo well in ours, which is much more ſtubborn and unpliant, and therefore are but as ſo many rubs in the ſtory, that are ſtill turning the narration out of its proper courſe.

v. 669. *Known is thy courage, etc.*] Hector here confeſſes the natural valour of Paris, but obſerves it to be overcome by the indolence of his temper and the love

What pity sloth should seize a soul so brave, 670
 Or godlike Paris live a woman's slave !
 My heart weeps blood at what the Trojans say,
 And hopes, thy deeds shall wipe the stain away.
 Hasten then, in all their glorious labours share ;
 For much they suffer, for thy sake, in war. 675
 These ills shall cease, whene'er by Jove's decree
 We crown the bowl to Heav'n and Liberty :
 While the proud foe his frustrate triumphs mourns,
 And Greece indignant thro' her seas returns.

of pleasure. An ingenious French writer very well remarks, that the true character of this hero has a great resemblance with that of Marc Antony. See the notes on the third book, v. 37. and 86.

v. 677. *We crown the bowl to Heav'n and Liberty.*] The Greek is, κρητήρα ἐλεύθερον, *the free bowl*, in which they made libations to Jupiter after the recovery of their liberty. The expression is observed by M. Dacier to resemble those of the Hebrews ; *The cup of salvation, the cup of sorrow, the cup of benediction*, etc. Athenæus mentions those cups which the Greeks called γραμματικά ἐκτώμαλα, and were consecrated to the Gods in memory of some success. He gives us the inscription of one of this sort, which was, ΔΙΟΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ.

T H E
I L I A D.

B O O K V I I .

T H E A R G U M E N T .

The single combate of Hector and Ajax.

THE battle renewing with double ardour upon the return of Hector, Minerva is under apprehensions for the Greeks. Apollo seeing her descend from Olympus, joins her near the Scaean gate. They agree to put off the general engagement for that day, and incite Hector to challenge the Greeks to a single combate. Nine of the princes accepting the challenge, the lot is cast, and falls upon Ajax. These heroes, after several attacks, are parted by night. The Trojans calling a council, Antenor proposes the delivery of Helen to the Greeks, to which Paris will not consent, but offers to restore them her riches. Priam sends a herald to make this offer, and to demand a truce for burning the dead, the last of which only is agreed to by Agamemnon. When the funerals are performed, the Greeks, pursuant to the advice of Nestor, erect a fortification to protect their fleet and camp, flanked with towers, and defended by a ditch and pallisades. Neptune testifies his jealousy at this work, but is pacified by a promise from Jupiter. Both armies pass the night in feasting, but Jupiter disheartens the Trojans with thunder and other signs of his wrath.

The three and twentieth day ends with the duel of Hector and Ajax : the next day the truce is agreed : another

is taken up in the funeral rites of the slain; and one more in building the fortification before the ships. So that somewhat above three days is employed in this book. The scene lies wholly in the field.

SO spoke the guardian of the Trojan state,
Then rush'd impetuous thro' the Scaean gate.

Him Paris follow'd to the dire alarms;

Both breathing slaughter, both resolv'd in arms.

As when to sailors lab'ring thro' the main, 5

That long had heav'd the weary oar in vain,

Jove bids at length th' expected gales arise;

The gales blow grateful, and the vessel flies:

So welcome these to Troy's desiring train;

The bands are chear'd, the war awakes again. 10

Bold Paris first the work of death begun,

On great Menestheus, Areithous' son.

v. 2. *Thro' the Scaean gate.*] This gate is not here particularized by Homer, but it appears by the 491st verse of the sixth book, that it could be no other. Eustathius takes notice of the difference of the words ἐξίσσυτο and κίε, the one applied to Hector the other to Paris: by which the motion of the former is described as an impetuous falling forth, agreeable to the violence of a warrior; and that of the latter as a calmer movement correspondent to the gentler character of a lover. But perhaps this remark is too refined, since Homer plainly gives Paris a character of bravery in what immediately precedes and follows this verse.

v. 5. *As when to sailors, etc.*] This simile makes it plain that the battle had relaxed during the absence of Hector in Troy; and consequently that the conversation of Diomed and Glaucus, in the former book, was not (as Homer's censurers would have it) in the heat of the engagement.

Sprung

Sprung from the fair Philomeda's embrace,

The pleasing Arne was his native place.

Then sunk Eioneus to the shades below,

15

Beneath his steely casque he felt the blow

Full on his neck, from Hector's weighty hand ;

And roll'd, with limbs relax'd, along the land.

By Glaucus' spear the bold Iphinous bleeds,

Fix'd in the shoulder as he mounts his steeds ;

20

Headlong he tumbles : his slack nerves unbound,

Drop the cold useless members on the ground.

When now Minerva saw her Argives slain,

From vast Olympus to the gleaming plain

v. 23. *When now Minerva, etc.*] This machine of the two deities meeting to part the two armies is very noble. Eustathius tells us it is an allegorical Minerva and Apollo : Minerva represents the prudent valour of the Greeks, and Apollo who stood for the Trojans, the power of destiny : so that the meaning of the allegory may be, that the valour and wisdom of the Greeks had now conquered Troy, had not destiny withstood. Minerva therefore complies with Apollo, an intimation that wisdom can never oppose fate. But if you take them in the literal sense as a real God and Goddess, it may be asked what necessity there was for the introduction of two such deities ? To this Eustathius answers, that the last book was the only one in which both armies were destitute of the aid of Gods : in consequence of which there is no gallant action atchieved, nothing extraordinary done, especially after the retreat of Hector ; but here the gods are again introduced to usher in a new scene of great actions. The same author offers this other solution : Hector, finding the Trojan army overpowered, considers how to stop the fury of the present battle ;

Fierce she descends : Apollo mark'd her flight, 25
 Nor shot less swift from Ilion's tow'ry height :
 Radiant they met, beneath the beechen shade ;
 When thus Apollo to the blue-ey'd maid.

What cause, O daughter of almighty Jove !
 Thus wings thy progress from the realms above ? 30
 Once more impetuous dost thou bend thy way,
 To give to Greece the long divided day ?
 Too much has Troy already felt thy hate,
 Now breathe thy rage, and hush the stern debate :
 This day, the business of the field suspend ; 35
 War soon shall kindle, and great Ilion bend ;
 Since vengeful Goddesses confed'rate join
 To raze her walls, tho' built by hands divine.

To whom the progeny of Jove replies :
 I left, for this, the council of the skies : 40
 But who shall bid conflicting hosts forbear,
 What art shall calm the furious sons of war ?
 To her the God : Great Hector's soul incite
 To dare the boldest Greek to single fight,
 Till Greece, provok'd, from all her numbers show 45
 A warrior worthy to be Hector's foe.

this he thinks may best be done by the proposal of a single combat : thus Minerva by a very easy and natural fiction may signify that wisdom or courage (she being the goddess of both) which suggests the necessity of diverting the war : and Apollo that seasonable stratagem by which he effected it.

v. 37. *Vengeful Goddesses.*] Ὑμῖν ἀθανάτησι in this place must signify Minerva and Juno, the word being of the feminine gender. Eustathius.

At this agreed, the heav'nly pow'rs withdrew;
 Sage Helenus their secret counsels knew:
 Hector inspir'd he sought: to him address,
 Thus told the dictates of his sacred breast. 50
 O son of Priam! let thy faithful ear
 Receive my words; thy friend and brother hear!
 Go forth persuasive, and a while engage
 The warring nations to suspend their rage;
 Then dare the boldest of the hostile train 55
 To mortal combat on the list'd plain.
 For not this day shall end thy glorious date;
 The Gods have spoke it, and their voice is fate.

v. 48. *Sage Helenus their sacred counsels knew.*] Helenus was the priest of Apollo, and might therefore be supposed to be informed of this by his God, or taught by an oracle that such was his will. Or else being an Augur, he might learn it from the flight of those birds into which the deities are here feigned to transform themselves, (perhaps for that reason, as it would be a very poetical manner of expressing it.) The fiction of these divinities sitting on the beech-tree in the shape of vultures, is imitated by Milton in the fourth book of Paradise Lost, where Satan, leaping over the boundaries of Eden, sits in the form of a cormorant upon the tree of life.

v. 57. *For not this day shall end thy glorious date.*] Eustathius justly observes, that Homer here takes from the greatness of Hector's intrepidity, by making him fore-know that he should not fall in this combat; whereas Ajax encounters him without any such encouragement. It may perhaps be difficult to give a reason for this management of the poet, unless we ascribe it to that commendable prejudice and honourable partiality he bears

He said : the warrior heard the word with joy ;
 Then with his spear restrain'd the youth of Troy, 60
 Held by the midst athwart. On either hand
 The squadrons part ; th' expecting Trojans stand,
 Great Agamemnon bids the Greeks forbear ;
 They breathe, and hush the tumult of the war.
 Th'Athenian maid, and glorious god of day, 65
 With silent joy the settling hosts survey :
 In form of vultures, on the beech's height
 They sit conceal'd, and wait the future fight.

The thronging troops obscure the dusky fields,
 Horrid with bristling spears, and gleaming shields. 70
 As when a gen'ral darkness veils the main,
 (Soft Zephyr curling the wide wat'ry plain)

his countrymen, which makes him give a superiority of courage to the heroes of his own nation.

v. 60. *Then with his spear restrain'd the youth of Troy, held by the midst athwart.*————] The remark of Eustathius here is observable : he tells us that the warriors of those times (having no trumpets, and because the voice of the loudest herald would be drowned in the noise of a battle) addressed themselves to the eyes, and that grasping the middle of the spear denoted a request that the fight might a while be suspended, the holding the spear in that position not being the posture of a warrior ; and thus Agamemnon understands it without any farther explication. But however it be, we have a lively picture of a general who stretches his spear accross, and presses back the advanced foldiers of his army.

v. 71. *As when a gen'ral darkness, etc.*] The thick ranks of the troops composing themselves, in order to sit and hear what Hector was about to propose, are com-

The waves scarce heave, the face of Ocean sleeps,
And a still horror saddens all the deeps :

Thus in thick orders settling wide around, 75

At length compos'd they sit, and shade the ground.

Great Hector first amidst both armies broke

The solemn silence, and their pow'rs bespoke.

Hear all ye Trojan, all ye Grecian bands,

What my soul prompts, and what some God commands. 80

pared to the waves of the sea just stirred by the west wind; the simile partly consisting in the darkness and stillness. This is plainly different from those images of the sea, given us on other occasions, where the armies in their engagement and confusion are compared to the waves in their agitation and tumult: and that the contrary is the drift of this simile appears particularly from Homer's using the word *ἴατο*, *sedebant*, twice in the application of it. All the other versions seem to be mistaken here: what caused the difficulty was the expression *ἀννυμένοιο νέον*, which may signify the *West* wind blowing on a sudden as well as *first rising*. But the design of Homer was to convey an image both of the gentle motion that arose over the field from the helmets and spears before their armies were quite settled; and of the repose and awe which ensued, when Hector began to speak.

v. 79. *Hear all ye Trojan, all ye Grecian bands.*]

The appearance of Hector, his formal challenge, and the affright of the Greeks upon it, have a near resemblance to the description of the challenge of Goliath in the first book of Samuel, ch. 17. *And he stood and cried to the armies of Israel!—Chuse you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me and to kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants.*—When Saul and all Israel heard the words

Great Jove, averſe our warfare to compoſe,
 O'erwhelms the nations with new toils and woes;
 War with a fiercer tide once more returns,
 'Till Ilion falls, or 'till yon' navy burns.

You then, O princes of the Greeks! appear; 85

'Tis Hector ſpeaks, and calls the Gods to hear:
 From all your troops ſelect the boldeſt knight,
 And him, the boldeſt, Hector dares to fight.

Here if I fall, by chance of battle ſlain,
 Be his my ſpoil, and his theſe arms remain; 90

But let my body, to my friends return'd,
 By Trojan hands and Trojan flames be burn'd.

*of the Philiftine, they were diſmayed and greatly afraid,
 etc.*

There is a fine air of gallantry and bravery in this challenge of Hector. If he ſeems to ſpeak too vainly, we ſhould conſider him under the character of a challenger, whoſe buſineſs it is to defy the enemy. Yet at the ſame time we find a decent modeſty in his manner of expreſſing the conditions of the combat: he ſays ſimply, *If my enemy kills me*; but of himſelf, *If Apollo grant me victory*. It was an imagination equally agreeable to a man of generoſity, and a lover of glory, to mention the monument to be crected over his vanquiſhed enemy; though we ſee he conſiders it not ſo much an honour paid to the conquered, as a trophy to the conqueror. It was natural too to dwell moſt upon the thought that pleaſed him beſt; for he takes no notice of any monument that ſhould be raiſed over himſelf, if he ſhould fall unfortunately. He no ſooner allows himſelf to expatiate, but the proſpect of glory carries him away thus far beyond his firſt intention, which was only to allow the enemy to inter their champion with decency.

And if Apollo, in whose aid I trust,
 Shall stretch your daring champion in the dust ;
 If mine the glory to despoil the foe ; 95
 On Phœbus' temple I'll his arms bestow ;
 The breathless carcase to your navy sent,
 Greece on the shore shall raise a monument ;
 Which when some future mariner surveys,
 Wash'd by broad Hellespont's resounding seas, 100
 Thus shall he say, " A valiant Greck lies there,
 " By Hector slain, the mighty man of war."
 The stone shall tell your vanquish'd hero's name,
 And distant ages learn the victor's fame.

v. 96. *On Phœbus' temple I'll his arms bestow.*] It was the manner of the ancients to dedicate trophies of this kind to the temples of the Gods. The particular reason for consecrating the arms in this place to Apollo, is not only as he was the constant protector of Troy, but as this thought of the challenge was inspired by him.

v. 98. *Greece on the shore shall raise a monument.*] Homer took the hint of this from several tombs of the ancient heroes who had fought at Troy, remaining in his time upon the shore of the Hellespont. He gives that sea the epithet *broad*, to distinguish the particular place of those tombs, which was on the Rhœtean, or Sigæan coast, where the Hellespont (which in other parts is narrow) opens itself to the Ægean sea. Strabo gives an account of the monument of Ajax near Rhœteum, and of Achilles at the promontory of Sigæum. This is one among a thousand proofs of our author's exact knowledge in geography and antiquities. Time (says Eustathius) has destroyed those tombs which were to have preserved Hector's glory ; but Homer's poetry more lasting than monuments, and proof against ages, will for ever support and convey it to the latest posterity.

This fierce defiance Greece astonish'd heard, 105
Blush'd to refuse, and to accept it fear'd.

Stern Menelaus first the silence broke,
And inly groaning, thus opprobrious spoke.

Women of Greece! Oh scandal of your race,
Whose coward souls your manly form disgrace. 110

v. 105. *Greece astonish'd heard.*] It seems natural to enquire, why the Greeks, before they accepted Hector's challenge, did not demand reparation for the former treachery of Pandarus, and insist upon the delivering up the author of it; which had been the shortest way for the Trojans to have wiped off that stain: it was very reasonable for the Greeks to reply to this challenge, that they could not venture a second single combat, for fear of such another insidious attempt upon their champion. And indeed I wonder that Nestor did not think of this excuse for his countrymen, when they were so backward to engage. One may make some sort of answer to this, if we consider the clearness of Hector's character; and his words at the beginning of the foregoing speech, where he first complains of the revival of the war as a misfortune common to them both (which is at once very artful and decent) and lays the blame of it upon Jupiter. Though, by the way, his charging the Trojan breach of faith upon the deity, looks a little like the reasoning of some modern saints in the doctrine of absolute reprobation, making God the author of sin, and may serve for some instance of the antiquity of that false tenet.

v. 109. *Women of Greece!* etc.] There is a great deal of fire in this speech of Menelaus, which very well agrees with his character and circumstances. Methinks while he speaks, one sees him in a posture of emotion, pointing with contempt at the commanders about him. He upbraids their cowardice, and wishes they may be-

How great the shame, when every age shall know
That not a Grecian met this noble foe !

Go then ! resolve to earth, from whence ye grew,
A heartless, spiritless, inglorious crew !

Be what ye seem, unanimated clay ! 115

Myself will dare the danger of the day.

'Tis man's bold task the gen'rous strife to try,

But in the hands of God is victory.

These words scarce spoke, with gen'rous ardour prest,
His manly limbs in azure arms he drest: 120

That day, Atides ! a superior hand

Had stretch'd thee breathless on the hostile strand ;

But all at once thy fury to compose,

The kings of Greece, an awful band, arose :

Ev'n hē their chief, great Agamemnon, press'd, 125

Thy daring hand, and this advice address'd.

Whither, O Menelaus ! would'st thou run,

And tempt a fate, which prudence bids thee shun?

Griev'd tho' thou art, forbear the rash design ;

Great Hector's arm is mightier far than thine. 139

Ev'n fierce Achilles learn'd its force to fear,

And trembling met this dreadful son of war. *Sept 8*

come (according to the literal words) *earth and water*: that is, be resolved into those principles they sprung from, or die. Thus Eustathius explains it very exactly from a verse he cites of Zenophanes.

Πᾶντες γὰρ γαίης καὶ ὕδατος ἐκγεγόμεστα.

v. 131. *Ev'n fierce Achilles learn'd his force to fear.*]

The poet every where takes occasion to set the brother

Sit thou secure amidst thy social band ;

Greece in our cause shall arm some pow'rful hand.

The mightiest warrior of th' Achaian name, 135

Tho' bold, and burning with desire of fame,

ly love of Agamemnon toward Menelaus in the most agreeable light : when Menelaus is wounded, Agamemnon is more concerned than he ; and here dissuades him from a danger, which he offers immediately after to undertake himself. He makes use of Hector's superior courage to bring him to a compliance : and tells him that even Achilles dares not engage with Hector. This (says Eustathius) is not true, but only the affection for his brother thus breaks out into a kind extravagance. Agamemnon likewise consults the honour of Menelaus, for it will be no disgrace to him to decline encountering a man whom Achilles himself is afraid of. Thus he artfully provides for his safety and honour at the same time.

v. 135. *The mightiest warrior, etc.*] It cannot with certainty be concluded from the words of Homer, who is the person to whom Agamemnon applies the last lines of this speech : the interpreters leave it as undetermined in their translations as it is in the original. Some would have it understood of Hector, that the Greeks would send such an antagonist against him, from whose hands Hector might be glad to escape. But this interpretation seems contrary to the plain design of Agamemnon's discourse, which only aims to deter his brother from so rash an undertaking as engaging with Hector. So that instead of dropping any expression which might depreciate the power or courage of this hero, he endeavours rather to represent him as the most formidable of men, and dreadful even to Achilles. This passage, therefore will be most consistent with Agamemnon's design, if it be considered as an argument offered to Menelaus, at once to dissuade him from the engagement, and to com-

Content the doubtful honour might forgoe,
So great the danger, and so brave the foe.

He said, and turn'd his brother's vengeful mind ;

He stoop'd to reason, and his rage resign'd, 140

No longer bent to rush on certain harms ;

His joyful friends unbrace his azure arms.

He, from whose lips divine persuasion flows,

Grave Nestor, then, in graceful act arose,

Thus to the kings he spoke. What grief, what shame 145

Attend on Greece, and all the Grecian name ?

fort him under the appearance of so great a disgrace as refusing the challenge ; by telling him that any warrior, how bold and intrepid soever, might be content to sit still and rejoice that he is not exposed to so hazardous an engagement. The words αἶκε φυγῇσι Διὸς ἐκ πολέμοιο, signify not to escape out of the combat (as the translators take it) but to avoid entering into it.

The phrase of γόνυ κάμψειν, which is literally *to bend the knee*, means (according to Eustathius) *to rest*, to sit down, καθισθῆναι, and is used so by Æschylus in *Prometheus*. Those interpreters were greatly mistaken, who imagined it signified *to kneel down*, to thank the Gods for escaping from such a combat ; whereas the custom of kneeling in prayer (as we before observed) was not in use among these nations.

v. 145. *The speech of Nestor*] This speech, if we consider the occasion of it, could be made by no person but Nestor. No young warrior could with decency exhort others to undertake a combat which he himself declined. Nothing could be more in his character than to represent to the Greeks how much they would suffer in the opinion of another old man like himself. In naming Peleus he sets before their eyes the expectations of all their fathers, and the shame that must afflict them

How shall, alas ! her hoary heroes mourn
Their sons degen'rate, and their race a scorn ?

in their old age, if their sons behaved themselves unworthily. The accounts he gives of the conversations he had formerly held with that king, and his jealousy for the glory of Greece, is a very natural picture of the warm dialogues of two old warriors upon the commencement of a new war. Upon the whole, Nestor never more displays his oratory than in this place : you see him rising with a sigh, expressing a pathetic sorrow, and wishing again for his youth, that he might wipe away this disgrace from his country. The humour of story-telling, so natural to old men, is almost always marked by Homer in the speeches of Nestor : the apprehension that their age makes them contemptible, puts them upon repeating the brave deeds of their youth. Plutarch justifies the praises Nestor here gives himself, and the vaunts of his valour, which on this occasion were only exhortations to those he addressed them to : by these he restores courage to the Greeks, who were astonished at the bold challenge of Hector, and causes nine of the princes to rise and accept it. If any man had a right to commend himself, it was this venerable prince, who in relating his own actions did no more than propose examples of virtue to the young. Virgil, without any such softening qualification, makes his hero say of himself,

Sum pius Æneas, fama super æthera notus.

And comfort a dying warrior with these words,

Æneæ magni dextra cadis.

The same author also imitates the wish of Nestor for a return of his youth, where Evander cries out,

What tears shall down thy silver beard be roll'd,
 Oh Peleus, old in arms, in wisdom old ! 150
 Once with what joy the gen'rous prince would hear
 Of ev'ry chief who fought this glorious war,
 Participate their fame, and pleas'd enquire
 Each name, each action, and each heroes fire !
 Gods ! should he see our warriors trembling stand, 155
 And trembling all before one hostile hand ;
 How would he lift his aged arms on high,
 Lament inglorious Greece, and beg to die !
 Oh ! would to all th' immortal pow'rs above,
 Minerva, Phœbus, and almighty Jove ! 160
 Years might again roll back, my youth renew,
 And give this arm the spring which once it knew :
 When fierce in war, where Jordan's waters fall
 I led my troops to Phea's trembling wall,
 And with th' Arcadian spears my prowess try'd, 165
 Where Celadon rolls down his rapid tyde.
 There Ereuthalion brav'd us in the field,
 Proud Areithous' dreadful arms to wield ;
 Great Areithous, known from shore to shore
 By the huge, knotted, iron mace he bore ; 170

*O mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos !
 Qualis eram, cum primam aciem Præneste sub ipsa
 Stravi, scutorumque incendi victor acervos,
 Et regem hac Herilum dextra sub Tartara misi.*

As for the narration of the Arcadian war introduced here, it is a part of the true history of those times, as we are informed by Pausanias.

No lance he shook, nor bent the twanging bow,
 But broke, with this, the battle of the foe,
 Him not by manly force Lycurgus slew,
 Whose guileful jav'lin from the thicket flew,
 Deep in a winding way his breast assail'd, 175
 Nor aught the warrior's thund'ring mace avail'd,
 Supine he fell: those arms which Mars before
 Had giv'n the vanquish'd, now the victor bore:
 But when old age had dim'd Lycurgus' eyes,
 To Ereuthalion he consign'd the prize. 180
 Furious with this, he crush'd our levell'd bands,
 And dar'd the trial of the strongest hands;
 Nor cou'd the strongest hands his fury stay;
 All saw, and fear'd, his huge tempestuous sway.
 'Till I, the youngest of the host, appear'd, 185
 And youngest, met whom all our army fear'd.
 I fought the chief: my arms Minerva crown'd:
 Prone fell the giant o'er a length of ground.

v. 177. *These arms which Mars before had giv'n.*
 Homer has the peculiar happiness of being able to raise
 the obscurest circumstance into the strongest point of
 light. Areithous had taken these arms in battle, and
 this gives occasion to our author say they were the pre-
 sent of Mars. Eustathius.

v. 188. *Prone fell the giant o'er a length of ground.*
 Nestor's insisting upon this circumstance of the fall of
 Ereuthalion, which paints his vast body lying extended
 on the earth, has a particular beauty in it, and recalls
 into the old man's mind the joy he felt on the sight of
 his enemy after he was slain. These are the fine and na-
 tural strokes that give life to the descriptions of poetry.

What then he was, oh were your Nestor now !
 Not Hector's self should want an equal foe. 190
 But warriors, you, that youthful vigour boast,
 The flow'r of Greece, th' examples of our host,
 Sprung from such fathers, who such numbers sway,
 Can you stand trembling, and desert the day ?
 His warm reproofs the list'ning kings inflame ; 195
 And nine, the noblest of the Grecian name,
 Up-started fierce : But far before the rest
 The king of men advanc'd his dauntless breast :
 Then bold Tydides, great in arms appear'd ;
 And next his bulk gigantic Ajax rear'd : 200
 Oileus follow'd ; Idomen was there,
 And Merion, dreadful as the God of war :
 With these Eurypylus and Thoas stand,
 And wise Ulysses clos'd the daring band.
 All these, alike inspir'd with noble rage, 205
 Demand the fight. To whom the Pylian sage :

v. 196. *And nine, the noblest, etc.*] In this catalogue of the nine warriors, who offer themselves as champions for Greece, one may take notice of the first and the last who rises up. Agamemnon advanced foremost, as it best became the general, and Ulysses with his usual caution took time to deliberate until seven more had offered themselves. Homer gives a great encomium of the eloquence of Nestor, in making it produce so sudden an effect ; especially when Agamemnon, who did not proffer himself before, even to save his brother, is now the first that steps forth : one would fancy this particular circumstance was contrived to shew, that eloquence has a greater power than even nature itself.

Left thirst of glory your brave souls divide,
 What chief shall combat, let the lots decide.
 Whom heav'n shall chuse, be his the chance to raise
 His country's fame, his own immortal praise. 210

The lots produc'd, each hero signs his own ;
 Then in the gen'ral's helm the fates are thrown.
 The people pray, with lifted eyes and hands,
 And vows like these ascend from all the bands.

v. 208. *Let the lots decide.*] This was a very prudent piece of conduct in Nestor : he does not chuse any of these nine himself, but leaves the determination entirely to chance. Had he named the hero, the rest might have been grieved to have seen another preferred before them ; and he well knew that the lot could not fall upon a wrong person, where all were valiant. Eustathius.

v. 209. *Whom heav'n shall chuse, be his the chance to raise*

His country's fame, his own immortal praise.]

The original of this passage is somewhat confused ; the interpreters render it thus : " Cast the lots, and he who " shall be chosen, if he escapes from this dangerous " combat, will do an eminent service to the Greeks, " and also have cause to be greatly satisfied himself." But the sense will appear more distinct and rational, if the words *ἕτος* and *αὐτός* be not understood of the same person : and the meaning of Nestor will then be, " He " who is chosen for the engagement by the lot, will do " his country great service ; and he likewise who is " not, will have reason to rejoice for escaping so dangerous a combat." The expression *αἶνε φύγησι Διὶς ἐκ πολέμοιο*, is the same Homer uses in v. 118, 119, of this book, which we explained in the same sense in the note on v. 135.

v. 213. *The people pray.*] Homer, who supposes e-

Grant, thou Almighty ! in whose hand is fate, 215

A worthy champion for the Grecian state.

This task let Ajax or Tydides prove,

Or he, the king of kings, belov'd by Jove.

Old Nestor shook the casque. By heav'n inspir'd,

Leap'd forth the lot, of ev'ry Greek desir'd. 220

This from the right to left the herald bears,

Held out in order to the Grecian peers :

Each to his rival yields the mark unknown,

'Till godlike Ajax finds the lot his own ;

Surveys th'inscription with rejoicing eyes, 225

Then casts before him, and with transport cries :

very thing on earth to proceed from the immediate disposition of heaven, allows not even the lots to come up by chance, but places them in the hands of God. The people pray to him for the disposal of them, and beg that Ajax, Diomed or Agamemnon may be the person. In which the poet seems to make the army give his own sentiments, concerning the preferments of valour in his heroes, to avoid an odious comparison in downright terms, which might have been inconsistent with his design of complementing the Grecian families. They afterwards offer up their prayers again, just as the combat is beginning, that if Ajax does not conquer, at least he may divide the glory with Hector ; in which the commentators observe Homer prepares the readers for what is to happen in the sequel.

v. 225. *Surveys th' inscription.*] There is no necessity to suppose that they put any letters upon these lots, at least not their names, because the herald could not tell to whom the lot of Ajax belonged, until he claimed it himself. It is more probable that they made some private mark or signet each upon his own lot. The

Warriors ! I claim the lot, and arm with joy ;
Be mine the conquest of this chief of Troy.

lot was only a piece of wood, a shell, or any thing that lay at hand. Eustathius.

v. 227. *Warriors ! I claim the lot.*] This is the first speech of Ajax in the Iliad. He is no orator, but always expresses himself in short ; generally bragging or threatening ; and very positive. The appellation of *ἔκτος Ἀχαιῶν*, the *bulwark of the Greeks*, which Homer almost constantly gives him, is extremely proper to the bulk, strength, and immobility of this heavy hero, who on all occasions is made to stand to the business and support the brunt. These qualifications are given him, that he may last out, when the rest of the chief heroes are wounded : this makes him of excellent use in Iliad 13, *etc.* He there puts a stop to the whole force of the enemy, and a long time prevents the firing of the ships. It is particularly observable, that he is never assisted by any deity, as the others are. Yet one would think Mars had been no improper patron for him, there being some resemblance in the boisterous character of that God and this hero. However it be, this consideration may partly account for a particular, which else might very well raise a question : why Ajax, who is in this book superior in strength to Hector, should afterwards in the Iliad shun to meet him, and appear his inferior ? We see the Gods make this difference : Hector is not only assisted by them in his own person, but his men second him, whereas those of Ajax are dispirited by heaven : to which one may add another which is a natural reason, Hector in this book expressly tells Ajax, “ he will now make use of no skill or art in fighting with him.” The Greek in bare brutal strength proved too hard for Hector, and therefore he might be supposed afterwards to have exerted his dexterity against him.

Now, while my brightest arms my limbs invest,
To Saturn's son be all your vows address: 230

But pray in secret, lest the foes should hear,
And deem your pray'rs the mean effect of fear.
Said I in secret! No, your vows declare,
In such a voice as fills the earth and air.

Lives their a chief whom Ajax ought to dread, 235
Ajax in all the toils of battle bred?

From warlike Salamis I drew my birth,
And born to combates, fear no force of earth.

He said. The troops, with elevated eyes,
Implore the God whose thunder rends the skies. 240

O father of mankind, superior lord!
On lofty Ida's holy hill ador'd;

Who in the highest heav'n has fix'd thy throne,
Supreme of Gods! unbounded, and alone:

Grant thou, that Telamon may bear away 245
The praise and conquest of this doubtful day;

Or if illustrious Hector be thy care,
That both may claim it, and that both may share.

Now Ajax brac'd his dazling armour on;
Sheath'd in bright steel the giant-warrior shone: 250

He moves to combat with majestic pace;
So stalks in arms the grizly God of Thrace,

v. 251. *He moves to combat.*] This description is full of the sublime imagery so peculiar to our author. The Grecian champion is drawn in all that terrible glory with which he equals his heroes to the gods: he is no less dreadful than Mars moving to battle, to execute the

When Jove to punish faithless men prepares,
 And gives whole nations to the waste of wars.
 Thus march'd the chief, tremendous as a God; 255
 Grimly he smil'd; earth trembled as he strode:
 His maffy jav'lin quiv'ring in his hand,
 He stood, the bulwark of the Grecian band.
 'Thro' ev'ry Argive heart new transport ran;
 All Troy stood trembling at the mighty man. 260
 Ev'n Hector paus'd; and with new doubt oppress'd,
 Felt his great heart suspended in his breast:
 'Twas vain to seek retreat, and vain to fear;
 Himself had challeng'd, and the foe drew near.
 Stern Telamon behind his ample shield, 265
 As from a brazen tow'r, o'erlook'd the field.
 Huge was its orb, with sev'n thick folds o'ercaft,
 Of tough bull-hides; of solid brafs the last.

decrees of Jove upon mankind, and determine the fate of nations. His march, his posture, his countenance, his bulk, his tower-like shield; in a word, his whole figure, strikes our eyes in all the strongest colours of poetry. We look upon him as a deity, and are not astonished at those emotions which Hector feels at the sight of him.

v. 269. *The work of Tychius.*] I shall ask leave to transcribe here the story of this Tychius, as we have it in the ancient *Life of Homer*, attributed to Herodotus. "Homer falling into poverty, determined to go to Cumæ, and as he pass'd thro' the plain of Hermus, came to a place called *the new wall*, which was a colony of the Cumæans. Here (*after he had recited five verses in celebration of Cumæ*) he was received by a leather-dresser, whose name was Tychius, into his

(The work of Tychius, who in Hyle dwell'd,
And all in arts of armoury excell'd.)

270

This Ajax bore before his manly breast,
And threat'ning, thus his adverse chief address'd.

Hector ! approach my arm, and singly know
What strength thou hast, and what the Grecian foe.

“house, where he shewed to his host and his company,
“a poem on the expedition of Amphiaraus, and his
“hymns. The admiration he there obtained procured
“him a present subsistence. They shew to this day
“with great veneration the place where he sat when
“he recited his verses, and a poplar which they affirm
“to have grown there in his time.” If there be any
thing in this story, we have reason to be pleased with
the grateful temper of our poet, who took this occasion
of immortalizing the name of an ordinary tradesman,
who had obliged him. The same account of his life
takes notice of several other instances of his gratitude in
the same kind.

v. 270. *In arts of armoury.*] I have called Tychius
an armourer, rather than a leather-dresser or currier;
his making the shield of Ajax authorizes one expression
as well as the other; and though that which Homer
uses had no lowness or vulgarity in the Greek, it is not
to be admitted into English heroic verse.

v. 273. *Hector ! approach my arm, etc.*] I think it
needless to observe how exactly this speech of Ajax
corresponds with his blunt and soldier-like character.
The same propriety, in regard to this hero, is main-
tained throughout the Iliad. The business he is about is
all that employs his head, and he speaks of nothing
but fighting. The last line is an image of his mind at
all times.

No more——be sudden, and begin the fight.

Achilles shuns the fight ; yet some there are, 273
 Not void of soul, and not unskill'd in war :
 Let him, unactive, on the sea-beat shore,
 Indulge his wrath, and aid our arms no more ;
 Whole troops of heroes Greece has yet to boast,
 And sends thee one, a sample of her host. 280
 Such as I am, I come to prove thy might ;
 No more——be sudden, and begin the fight.

O son of Telamon, thy country's pride !
 (To Ajax thus the Trojan prince reply'd)
 Me, as a boy or woman, would'st thou fright, 285
 New to the field, and trembling at the fight ?
 Thou meet'st a chief deserving of thy arms,
 To combat born, and bred amidst alarms :
 I know to shift my ground, remount the car,
 Turn, charge, and answer ev'ry call of war ; 290

v. 285. *Me, as a boy or woman, would'st thou fright.*] this reply of Hector seems rather to allude to some gesture Ajax had used in his approach to him, *as shaking his spear*, or the like, than to any thing he had said in his speech. For what he had told him amounts to no more, than that there were several in the Grecian army who had courted the honour of this combat as well as himself. I think one must observe many things of this kind in Homer, that allude to the particular attitude or action, in which the author supposes the person to be at that time.

v. 290. *Turn, charge, and answer ev'ry call of war.*] The Greek is, *To move my feet to the sound of Mars*, which seems to shew that those military dances were in use even in Homer's time, which were afterwards practised in Greece.

To right, to left, the dextrous lance I wield,
And bear thick battle on my founding shield.
But open be our fight, and bold each blow ;
I steal no conquest from a noble foe.

He said, and rising, high above the field 295
Whirl'd the long lance against the sevenfold shield.
Full on the brass descending from above
Thro' six bull-hides the furious weapon drove,
'Till in the seventh it fix'd. Then Ajax threw,
Thro' Hector's shield the forceful jav'lin flew, 300
His corslet enters, and his garment rends,
And glancing downwards near his flank descends.
The wary Trojan shrinks, and bending low
Beneath his buckler, disappoints the blow.
From their bor'd shields the chiefs their jav'lins drew, 305
Then close impetuous, and the charge renew :
Fierce as the mountain lions bath'd in blood,
Or foaming boars, the terror of the wood.
At Ajax Hector his long lance extends ; 310
The blunted point against the buckler bends.
But Ajax watchful as his foe drew near,
Drove thro' the Trojan targe the knotty spear ;

[v. 305. *From their bor'd shields the chiefs their jav'lins drew.*] Homer in this combat makes his heroes perform all their exercises with all sorts of weapons ; first darting lances at distance, then advancing closer and pushing with spears, then casting stones, and lastly attacking with swords ; in every one of which the poet gives the superiority to his countryman. It is farther observable (as Eustathius remarks) that Ajax allows Hector an advantage in throwing the first spear.

It reach'd his neck, with matchless strength impell'd;
 Spouts the black gore, and dims his shining shield. 315
 Yet ceas'd not Hector thus; but, stooping down,
 In his strong hand up-heav'd a flinty stone,
 Black, craggy, vast: to this his force he bends;
 Full on the brazen boss the stone descends;
 The hollow brass resounded with the shock. 320
 Then Ajax seiz'd the fragment of a rock,
 Apply'd each nerve, and swinging round on high,
 With force tempestuous let the ruin fly:
 The huge stone thund'ring thro' his buckler broke:
 His slacken'd knees receiv'd the numbing stroke; 325
 Great Hector falls extended on the field,
 His bulk supporting on the shatter'd shield;
 Nor wanted heav'nly aid: Apollo's might
 Confirm'd his sinews, and restor'd to fight.
 And now both heroes their broad faulchions drew: 330
 In flaming circles round their heads they flew;
 But then by Heralds voice the word was giv'n,
 The sacred ministers of earth and heav'n:

v. 323. *Apollo's might.*] In the beginning of this book we left Apollo perching upon a tree, in the shape of a vulture, to behold the combat: he comes now very opportunely to save his favourite Hector. Eustathius says that Apollo is the same with Destiny, so that when Homer says Apollo saved him, he means no more than that it was not his fate yet to die, as Helenus had foretold him.

v. 332. *Heralds, the sacred ministers.*] The heralds of old were sacred persons, accounted the delegates of Mercury, and inviolable by the law of nations. The
 ancient

Divine Talthybius whom the Greeks employ,
 And sage Idæus on the part of Troy, 335
 Between the swords, their peaceful sceptres rear'd;
 And first Idæus' awful voice was heard.

Forbear, my sons ! your farther force to prove,
 Both dear to men, and both belov'd of Jove.
 To either host your matchless worth is known, 340
 Each sounds your praise, and war is all your own.
 But now the night extends her awful shade ;
 The goddess parts you ; be the night obey'd.

To whom great Ajax his high soul express'd.
 O sage ! to Hector be these words address'd. 345

ancient histories have many examples of the severity exercised against those who committed any outrage upon them. Their office was to assist in the sacrifices and councils, to proclaim war or peace, to command silence at ceremonies or single combates, to part the combatants, and to declare the conqueror, *etc.*

v. 334. *Divine Talthybius &c.*] This interposition of the two heralds to part the combatants, on the approach of the night, is applied by Tasso to the single combat of Tancred and Argantes, in the sixth book of his Jerusalem. The herald's speech, and particularly that remarkable injunction to *obey the night*, are translated literally by that author. The combatants there also part not without a promise of meeting again in battle, on some more favourable opportunity.

v. 337. *And first Idæus.*] Homer observes a just decorum in making Idæus the Trojan herald speak first, to end the combat wherein Hector had the disadvantage, Ajax is very sensible of this difference, when in his reply he requires that Hector should first ask for a cessation, as he was the challenger. Eustathius.

Let him, who first provok'd our chiefs to fight,
 Let him demand the sanction of the night;
 If first he ask it, I content obey,
 And cease the strife when Hector shows the way.

Oh first of Greeks! (his noble foe rejoin'd) } 350
 Whom heav'n adorns, superior to thy kind, }
 With strength of body, and with worth of mind! }
 Now martial law commands us to forbear;
 Hereafter we shall meet in glorious war.
 Some future day shall lengthen out the strife, 355
 And let the Gods decide of death or life!
 Since then the night extends her gloomy shade,
 And heav'n enjoins it, be the night obey'd,
 Return, brave Ajax, to thy Grecian friends,
 And joy the nations whom thy arm defends; 360
 As I shall glad each chief, and Trojan wife,
 Who wearies heav'n with vows for Hector's life.

v. 350. *Oh first of Greeks etc.*] Hector, how hardly soever he is prest by his present circumstance, says nothing to obtain a truce that is not strictly consistent with his honour. When he praises Ajax, it lessens his own disadvantage, and he is careful to extol him only above the Greeks, without acknowledging him more valiant than himself or the Trojans: Hector is always jealous of the honour of his country. In what follows we see he keeps himself on a level with his adversary; *Hereafter we shall meet.---Go thou, and give the same joy to thy Grecians for thy escape, as I shall to my Trojans. The point of honour in all this is very nicely preserved.*

v. 362. *Who wearies heav'n with vows for Hector's life.*] Eustathius gives many solutions of the difficulty in these words, *Θείον ἀγῶνα*: They mean either that the

But let us, on this memorable day,
Exchange some gift; that Greece and Troy may say,
“Not hate, but glory, made these chiefs contend; 365
“And each brave foe was in his soul a friend.”

With that, a sword with stars of silver grac'd,
The baldric studded, and the sheath enchas'd,
He gave the Greek. The gen'rous Greek bestow'd
A radiant belt that rich with purple glow'd. 370

Trojan ladies will pray to the Gods for him (*ἀγῶνως* or *certatim*) with the utmost zeal and transport; or that they will go in procession to the temples for him (*εἰς θεῶν ἀγῶνα*, *cætum Deorum*;) or that they will pray to him as to a God ὅσα Θεῶ τινὶ ἐυζονται μοι.

v. 364. *Exchange some gift.*] There is nothing that gives us a greater pleasure in reading an heroic poem, than the generosity which one brave enemy shews to another. The proposal made here by Hector, and so readily embraced by Ajax, makes the parting of these two heroes more glorious to them than the continuance of the combat could have been. A French critic is shocked at Hector's making proposals to Ajax with an air of equality; he says a man that is vanquished, instead of talking of presents, ought to retire with shame from his conqueror. But that Hector was vanquished, is by no means to be allowed; Homer had told us that his strength was restored by Apollo, and that the two combatants were engaging again upon equal terms with their swords. So that this criticism falls to nothing. For the rest, it is said that this exchange of presents between Hector and Ajax gave birth to a proverb, That the presents of enemies are generally fatal. For Ajax with this sword afterwards killed himself, and Hector was dragged by this belt at the chariot of Achilles.

Then with majestic grace they quit the plain;
This seeks the Grecian, that the Phrygian train.

The Trojan bands returning Hector wait,
And hail with joy the champion of their state :
Escap'd great Ajax, they survey'd him round, 375
Alive unharm'd, and vig'rous from his wound.
'To Troy's high 'gates the godlike man they bear,
'Their present triumph, as their late despair.

But Ajax, glorying in his hardy deed,
The well-arm'd Greeks to Agamemnon lead. 380
A steer for sacrifice the king design'd,
Of full five years, and of the nobler kind.
The victim falls ; they stripe the smoking hide,
The beast they quarter, and the joints divide ;
Then spread the tables, the repast prepare, 385
Each takes his seat, and each receives his share.
'The king himself (an honorary sign)
Before great Ajax plac'd the mighty chine.

v. 388. *Before great Ajax plac'd the mighty chine*]
This is one of those passages that will naturally fall under the ridicule of a true modern critic. But what Agamemnon here bestows upon Ajax was in former times a great mark of respect and honour : not only as it was customary to distinguish the quality of their guests, by the largeness of the portions assigned them at their tables, but as this part of the victim peculiarly belonged to the king himself. It is worth remarking on this occasion, that the simplicity of those times allowed the eating of no other flesh but beef, mutton, or kid : this is the food of the heroes of Homer, and the patriarchs and warriors of the Old Testament. Fishing and fowling

When now the rage of hunger was remov'd;
 Nestor, in each persuasive art approv'd, 390
 The sage whose counsels long had sway'd the rest,
 In words like these his prudent thought exprest.

How dear, O kings! this fatal day has cost,
 What Greeks are perish'd! what a people lost!
 What tides of blood have drench'd Scamander's shore! 395
 What crouds of heroes sunk, to rise no more!
 Then hear me, chief! nor let the morrow's light
 Awake thy squadrons to new toils of fight:
 Some space at least permit the war to breathe,
 While we to flames our slaughter'd friends bequeathe. 400

were the arts of more luxurious nations, and came much later into Greece and Israel.

One cannot read this passage without being pleased with the wonderful simplicity of the old heroic ages. We have here a gallant warrior returning victorious (for that he thought himself so, appears from these words *κεχαρηότα νίκη*) from a single combate with the bravest of his enemies; and he is no otherwise rewarded, than with a larger portion of the sacrifice at supper. Thus an upper seat, or a more capacious bowl, was a recompence for the greatest actions; and thus the only reward in the olympic games was a pine branch, or a chaplet of parsley or wild olive. The latter part of this note belongs to Eustathius.

v. 400. *While we to flames, etc*] There is a great deal of artifice in this counsel of Nestor, of burning the dead, and raising a fortification; for though piety was the specious pretext, their security was the real aim of the truce, which they made use of to finish their works. Their doing this at the same time they erected the funeral piles, made the imposition easy upon the enemy.

From the red field their scatter'd bodies bear,
And nigh the fleet a fun'ral structure rear ;

who might naturally mistake one work for the other. And this also obviates a plain objection, *viz.* Why the Trojans did not interrupt them in this work ? the truce determined no exact time, but as much as was needful for discharging the rites of the dead.

I fancy it may not be unwelcome to the reader to enlarge a little upon the way of *disposing the dead* among the ancients. It may be proved from innumerable instances, that the Hebrews interred their dead ; thus Abraham's burying-place is frequently mentioned in scripture : and that the Ægyptians did the same, is plain from their embalming them. Some have been of opinion, that the usage of burning the dead was originally to prevent any outrage to the bodies from their enemies ; which imagination is rendered not improbable by that passage in the first book of Samuel, where the Israelites burn the bodies of Saul and his sons, after they had been misused by the Philistines, even though their common custom was to bury their dead : and so Sylla among the Romans was the first of his family who ordered his body to be burnt, for fear the barbarities he had exercised on that of Marius might be retaliated upon his own. Tully, *De Legibus lib. 2. Proculdubio cremandi ritus a Græcis venit, nam sepultum legimus Numam ad Anienis fontem ; totique genti Corneliæ solenne fuisse sepulchrum, usque ad Syllam, qui primus ex ea gente crematus est.* The Greeks used both ways of interring and burning ; Patroclus was burned, and Ajax laid in the ground, as appears from Sophocles's Ajax, lin. 1185.

Σπεῦσον κοίλην κάπετόν τιν' ἰδεῖν
Τῷ δὲ τάφον. —————

Hasten (says the chorus) to prepare a hollow hole, a grave, for this man.

So decent urns their snowy bones may keep,
 And pious children o'er their ashes weep.
 Here, where on one promiscuous pile they blaz'd, 405
 High o'er them all a gen'ral tomb be rais'd;
 Next, to secure our camp, and naval pow'rs,
 Raise an embattel'd wall, with lofty tow'rs;
 From space to space be ample gates around,
 For passing chariots, and a trench profound. 410
 So Greece to combat shall in safety go,
 Nor fear the fierce incursions of the foe.
 'Twas thus the sage his wholesome counsel mov'd;
 The scepter'd kings of Greece his words approv'd.

Thucydides, in his second book, mentions *λάρνακες κύπαρισσίνας*, coffins or chests made of cypress wood, in which the Athenians kept the bones of their friends that died in the wars.

The Romans derived from the Greeks both these customs of burning and burying: *In urbe neve SEPELITO neve URITO*, says the law of the twelve tables. The place where they burned the dead was set apart for this religious use, and called *Glebe*; from which practice the name is yet applied to all the grounds belonging to the church.

Plutarch observes, that Homer is the first who mentions one general tomb for a number of dead persons. Here is a Tumulus built round the Pyre, not to bury their bodies, for they were to be burned; nor to receive the bones, for those were to be carried to Greece; but perhaps to inter their ashes, (which custom may be gathered from a passage in Iliad 23. v. 255.) or it might be only a Cenotaph, in remembrance of the dead.

Meanwhile, conven'd at Priam's palace-gate, 415
 The Trojan peers in nightly council fate :
 A senate void of order, as of choice,
 Their hearts were fearful, and confus'd their voice.
 Antenor rising, thus demands their ear :
 Ye Trojans, Dardans, and auxiliars hear ! 420
 'Tis heav'n the counsel of my breast inspires,
 And I but move what ev'ry God requires :
 Let Sparta's treasures be this hour restor'd,
 And Argive Helen own her ancient Lord.
 The ties of faith, the sworn alliance broke, 425
 Our impious battles the just Gods provoke.
 As this advice ye practise, or reject,
 So hope success, or dread the dire effect.

The senior spoke, and fate. To whom reply'd
 The graceful husband of the Spartan bride. 430

v. 416. *The Trojan peers in nightly council fate.*
 There is a great beauty in the two epithets Homer gives
 to this council, δεινὴ, τετρακκοῖα, *timida, turbulenta*.
 The unjust side is always fearful and discordant. I think
 M. Dacier has not intirely done justice to this thought
 in her translation. Horace seems to have accounted
 this an useful and necessary part that contained the great
 moral of the Iliad, as may be seen from his selecting it
 in particular from the rest, in his epistle to Lollius.

*Fabula, qua Paridis propter narratur amorem,
 Græcia Barbaricæ lento collisa duello,
 Stultorum regum et populorum continet æstus.
 Antenor censet belli præcidere causam.
 Quid Paris ? Ut salvus regnet, vivatque beatus,
 Cogi posse negat.*—————

Cold counsels, Trojan, may become thy years,
 But found ungrateful in a warrior's ears :
 Old man, if wide of fallacy or art
 Thy words express the purpose of thy heart,
 Thou, in thy time, more sound advice hast giv'n ; 435
 But wisdom has its date, assign'd by heav'n.
 Then hear me, princes of the Trojan name !
 Their treasures I'll restore, but not the dame ;
 My treasures too, for peace, I will resign ;
 But be this bright possession ever mine. 440

'Twas then, the growing discord to compose,
 Slow from his seat the rev'rend Priam rose :
 His godlike aspect deep attention drew :
 He paus'd, and these pacific words ensue.
 Ye Trojans, Dardans, and auxiliar bands ! 445
 Now take refreshment as the hour demands :
 Guard well the walls, relieve the watch of night,
 'Till the new sun restores the chearful light :

v. 442. *The rev'rend Priam rose.*] Priam rejects the wholesome advice of Antenor, and complies with his son. This is indeed extremely natural to the indulgent character and easy nature of the old king, of which the whole Trojan war is a proof; but I could wish Homer had not just in this place celebrated his wisdom in calling him *Θεόφρον μέσσω ἀταλάντος*. Spondan-
 dus refers this blindness of Priam to the power of fate, the time now approaching when Troy was to be punished for its injustice. Something like this weak fondness of a father is described in the scripture, in the story of David and Absalom.

Then shall our herald to th'Atrides sent,
 Before their ships proclaim my son's intent. 450
 Next let a truce be ask'd; that Troy may burn
 Her slaughter'd heroes, and their bones in-urn;
 That done, once more the fate of war be try'd,
 And whose the conquest, mighty Jove decide!

The monarch spoke: the warriors snatch'd with haste
 (Each at his post in arms) a short repaste. 456
 Soon as the rosy morn had wak'd the day,
 To the black ships Idæus bent his way:
 There, to the sons of Mars, in council found,
 He rais'd his voice: the host stood list'ning round, 460
 Ye sons of Atreus, and ye Greeks, give ear!
 The words of Troy, and Troy's great monarch hear.

v. 451. *Next let a truce be ask'd.*] The conduct of Homer in this place is remarkable: he makes Priam propose in council to send to the Greeks to ask a truce to bury the dead. This the Greeks themselves had before determined to propose: but it being more honourable to his country, the poet makes the Trojan herald prevent any proposition that could be made by the Greeks. Thus they are requested to do what they themselves were about to request, and have the honour to comply with a proposal which they themselves would otherwise have taken as a favour. Eustathius.

v. 456. *Each at his post in arms.*] We have here the manner of the Trojans taking their repast: not promiscuously, but each at his post. Homer was sensible that military men ought not to remit their guard, even while they refresh themselves, but in every action display the soldier. Eustathius.

v. 461. *The speech of Idæus.*] The proposition of restoring the treasures, and not Helen, is sent as from

Pleas'd may ye hear (so heav'n succeed my pray'rs)

What Paris, author of the war, declares.

The spoils and treasures he to Ilion bore, 465

(Oh had he perish'd ere they touch'd our shore)

He proffers injur'd Greece; with large increase

Of added Trojan wealth to buy the peace.

But to restore the beauteous bride again,

This Greece demands, and Troy requests in vain. 470

Next, O ye chiefs! we ask a truce to burn

Our slaughter'd heroes, and their bones in-urn.

That done, once more the fate of war be try'd,

And whose the conquest, mighty Jove decide!

The Greeks gave ear, but none the silence broke; 475

At length Tydides rose, and rising spoke.

Paris only; in which his father seems to permit him to treat by himself as a sovereign prince, and the sole author of the war. But the herald seems to exceed his commission in what he tells the Greeks. Paris only offered to restore the treasures he brought from Greece, not including those he brought from Sidon and other coasts, where he touched in his voyage: but Idæus here proffers all that he had brought to Troy. He adds, as from himself, a wish that Paris had perished in that voyage. Some ancient expositors suppose those words to be spoken aside, or in a low voice, as it is usual in dramatic poetry. But without that salvo, a generous love for the welfare of his country might transport Idæus into some warm expressions against the author of its woes. He lays aside the herald to act the patriot, and speaks with indignation against Paris, that he may influence the Grecian captains to give a favourable answer. Eustathius.

v. 475. *The Greeks gave ear but none the silence broke.*]

Oh take not, friends! defrauded of your fame,
 Their proffer'd wealth, nor ev'n the Spartan dame.
 Let conquest make them ours: fate shakes their wall,
 And Troy already totters to her fall. 480

Th' admiring chiefs, and all the Grecian name,
 With gen'ral shouts return'd him loud acclaim.
 'Then thus the king of kings rejects the peace:
 Herald! in him thou hear'st the voice of Greece.
 For what remains; let fun'ral flames be fed 485
 With heroes corps: I war not with the dead:
 Go search your slaughter'd chiefs on yonder plain,
 And gratify the Manes of the slain.

This silence of the Greeks might naturally proceed from an opinion, that however desirous they were to put an end to this long war, Menelaus would never consent to relinquish Helen, which was the thing insisted upon by Paris. Eustathius accounts for it in another manner, and it is from him M. Dacier has taken her remark. The princes (says he) were silent, because it was the part of Agamemnon to determine in matters of this nature; and Agamemnon is silent, being willing to hear the inclinations of the princes. By this means he avoided the imputation of exposing the Greeks to dangers for his advantage and glory; since he only gave the answer which was put into his mouth by the princes, with a general applause of the army.

v. 477. *Oh take not, Greeks, etc.*] There is a peculiar decorum in making Diomed the author of this advice, to reject even Helen if she were offered; this had not agreed with an amorous husband like Menelaus, nor with a cunning politician like Ulysses, nor with a wise old man like Nestor. But it is proper to Diomed, not only as a young fearless warrior, but as he is in particular an enemy to the interests of Venus. Be

Be witness, Jove, whose thunder rolls on high:
He said, and rear'd his sceptre to the sky. 490

To sacred Troy, where all her princes lay
To wait th' event, the herald bent his way.
He came, and standing in the midst, explain'd
The peace rejected, but the truce obtain'd.
Strait to their sev'ral cares the Trojans move, 495
Some search the plains, some fell the sounding grove:
Nor less the Greeks, descending on the shore,
Hew'd the green forests, and the bodies bore.
And now from forth the chambers of the main,
To shed his sacred light on earth again. 500

Arose the golden chariot of the day,
And tipt the mountains with a purple ray.
In mingled throngs the Greek and Trojan train
Thro' heaps of carnage search'd the mournful plain.
Scarce could the friend his slaughter'd friend explore, 505
With dust dishonour'd, and deform'd with gore.
The wounds they wash'd, their pious tears they shed,
And, laid along their cars, deplor'd the dead.

v. 508. *And, laid along their cars.*] These probably were not chariots, but carriages; for Homer makes Nestor say in v. 332. of the original, that this was to be done with mules and oxen, which were not commonly joined to chariots, and the word *κυκλόσσομεν* there, may be applied to any vehicle that runs on wheels. "*Ἀμύξια* signifies indifferently *plaustrum* and *carrus*; and our English word *car* implies either. But if they did use chariots in bearing their dead, it is at least evident, that those chariots were drawn by mules and oxen at funeral

Sage Priam check'd their grief: with silent haste
 The bodies decent on the piles were plac'd: 510
 With melting hearts the cold remains they burn'd;
 And sadly slow, to sacred Troy return'd.
 Nor less the Greeks their pious sorrows shed,
 And decent on the pile dispose the dead;
 The cold remains consume with equal care; 515
 And slowly, sadly, to their fleet repair.
 Now, ere the morn had streak'd with red'ning light,
 The doubtful confines of the day and night;
 About the dying flames the Greeks appear'd,
 And round the pile a gen'ral tomb they rear'd. 520
 Then, to secure the camp and naval pow'rs,
 They rais'd embattel'd walls with lofty tow'rs:

solemnities. Homer's using the word ἀμύξαι and not διφρεος, confirms this opinion.

v. 521. *Then, to secure the camp, etc.*] Homer has been accused of an offence against probability, in causing this fortification to be made so late as in the last year of the war. M. Dacier answers to this objection, That the Greeks had no occasion for it until the departure of Achilles: he alone was a greater defence to them; and Homer had told the reader in a preceding book, that the Trojans never durst venture out of the walls of Troy while Achilles fought: these intrenchments therefore serve to raise the glory of his principal hero, since they become necessary as soon as he withdraws his aid. She might have added, that Achilles himself says all this, and makes Homer's apology in the ninth book, v. 460. — The same author, speaking of this fortification, seems to doubt whether the use of intrenching camps was known in the Trojan war, and is rather inclined to think Homer borrowed it from what

From space to space were ample gates around,
 For passing chariots; and a trench profound,
 Of large extent; and deep in earth below 525
 Strong piles infix'd stood adverse to the foe.

So toil'd the Greeks: Meanwhile the Gods above
 In shining circle round their father Jove,

was practised in his own time. But I believe (if we consider the caution with which he has been observed, in some instances already given, to preserve the manners of the age he writes of, in contradistinction to what was practised in his own;) we may reasonably conclude the art of fortification was in use even so long before him, and in the degree of perfection that he here describes it. If it was not, and if Homer was fond of describing an improvement in this art made in his own days; nothing could be better contrived than his feigning Nestor to be the author of it, whose wisdom and experience in war rendered it probable that he might carry his projects farther than the rest of his contemporaries. We have here a fortification as perfect as any in the modern times: a strong wall is thrown up, towers are built upon it from space to space, gates are made to issue out at, and a ditch sunk, deep, wide and long, to all which palisades are added to compleat it.

v. 527. *Meanwhile the Gods.*] The fiction of this wall raised by the Greeks, has given no little advantage to Homer's poem, in furnishing him with an opportunity of changing the scene, and in a great degree the subject and accidents of his battles; so that the following descriptions of war are totally different from all the foregoing. He takes care at the first mention of it to fix in us a great idea of this work, by making the Gods immediately concerned about it. We see Neptune jealous lest the glory of his own work, the walls of Troy, should be effaced by it; and Jupiter comforting him

Amaz'd beheld the wond'rous works of man :

Then he, whose trident shakes the earth, began. 530

What mortals henceforth shall our pow'r adore,
Our fanes frequent, our oracles implore,
If the proud Grecians thus successful boast
Their rising bulwarks on the sea-beat coast ?

with a prophecy that it shall be totally destroyed in a short time. Homer was sensible that as this was a building of his imagination only, and not founded (like many other of his descriptions) upon some antiquities or traditions of the country, so posterity might convict him of a falsity, when no remains of any such wall should be seen on the coast. Therefore (as Aristotle observes) he has found this way to elude the censure of an improbable fiction : the word of Jove was fulfilled, the hands of the Gods, the force of the rivers, and the waves of the sea, demolished it. In the twelfth book he digresses from the subject of his poem, to describe the execution of this prophecy. The verses there are very noble, and have given the hint to Milton for those in which he accounts after the same poetical manner, for the vanquishing of the terrestrial paradise.

*All fountains of the deep
Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
Beyond all bounds, 'till inundation rise
Above the highest hills : then shall this mount
Of Paradise by might of waves be mov'd
Out of its place, push'd by the horned flood,
With all its verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,
Down the great river to the opening gulf,
And there take root, an island salt and bare,
The haunt of seals and orcs, and sea-mews clang.*

Book VII. H O M E R's I L I A D, 101

See the long walls extending to the main, 535

No God consulted, and no victim slain !

Their fame shall fill the world's remotest ends ;

Wide, as the morn her golden beam extends.

While old Laomedon's divine abodes,

Those radiant structures rais'd by lab'ring Gods, 540

Shall, raz'd and lost, in long oblivion sleep.

Thus spoke the hoary monarch of the deep.

Th'Almighty thund'rer with a frown replies,

That clouds the world, and blackens half the skies.

Strong God of Ocean ! thou, whose rage can make 545

The solid earth's eternal basis shake !

What cause of fear from mortal works cou'd move.

The meanest subject of our realms above ?

Where-e'er the sun's refulgent rays are cast,

Thy pow'r is honour'd, and thy fame shall last. 550

But yon' proud work no future age shall view,

No trace remain where once the glory grew.

The sapp'd foundations by thy force shall fall,

And whelm'd beneath thy waves, drop the huge wall :

Vast drifts of sand shall change the former shore ; 555

The ruin vanish'd, and the name no more.

Thus they in heav'n : while o'er the Grecian train,

The rolling sun descending to the main

Beheld the finish'd work. Their bulls they flew :

Black from the tents the sav'ry vapours flew. 560

And now the fleet, arriv'd from Lemnos' strands,
 With Bacchus' blessings cheer'd the gen'rous bands.
 Of fragrant wines the rich Eunæus sent
 A thousand measures to the royal tent.
 (Eunæus, whom Hypsipyle of yore 565
 To Jason, shepherd of his people, bore.)
 The rest they purchas'd at their proper cost,
 And well the plenteous freight supply'd the host:
 Each, in exchange, proportion'd treasures gave:
 Some brass, or iron, some an ox, or slave, 570
 All night they feast, the Greek and Trojan pow'rs;
 Those on the fields, and these within their tow'rs.
 But Jove averse the signs of wrath display'd,
 And shot red light'nings thro' the gloomy shade:

v. 561. *And now the fleet; etc.*] The verses from hence to the end of the book, afford us the knowledge of some points of history and antiquity. As that Jason had a son by Hypsipyle, who succeeded his mother in the kingdom of Lemnos: that the isle of Lemnos was anciently famous for its wines, and drove a traffick in them; and that coined money was not in use in the time of the Trojan war, but the trade of countries carried on by exchange in gross, brass, oxen, slaves, *etc.* I must not forget the particular term used here for slave, ἀργεάποδον, which is literally the same with our modern word *footman*.

v. 573. *But Jove averse, etc.*] The signs by which Jupiter here shews his wrath against the Grecians, are a prelude to those more open declarations of his anger which follow in the next book, and prepare the mind of the reader for that machine, which might otherwise seem too bold and violent.

Book VII. H O M E R's I L I A D. 103

Humbled they stood ; pale horror seiz'd on all, 575

While the deep thunder shook th' aerial hall.

Each pour'd to Jove before the bowl was crown'd,

And large libations drench'd the thirsty ground :

Then late refresh'd with sleep from toils of fight,

Enjoy'd the balmy blessings of the night. 580

an.

T H E
I L I A D.

B O O K V I I L

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The second battle, and the distress of the Greeks.

JUPITER assembles a council of the deities, and threatens them with the pains of Tartarus if they assist either side: *Minerva* only obtains of him that she may direct the Greeks by her counsels. The armies join battle; *Jupiter* on mount *Ida* weighs in his balances the fates of both, and affrights the Greeks with his thunders and lightnings. *Nestor* alone continues in the field in great danger; *Dio-med* relieves him; whose exploits, and those of *Hector*, are excellently described. *Juno* endeavours to animate *Neptune* to the assistance of the Greeks, but in vain. The acts of *Teucer*, who is at length wounded by *Hector*, and carried off. *Juno* and *Minerva* prepare to aid the Greeks, but are restrained by *Iris*, sent from *Jupiter*. The night puts an end to the battle. *Hector* continues the field (the Greeks being driven to their fortification before the ships) and gives orders to keep the watch all night in the camp, to prevent the enemy from re-imbarking and escaping by flight. They kindle fires through all the field, and pass the night under arms.

THE time of seven and twenty days is employed from the opening of the poem to the end of this book. The scene here (except of the celestial machines) lies in the field toward the sea-shore.

AURORA now, fair daughter of the dawn,
 Sprinkled with rosy light the dewy lawn;
 When Jove conven'd the senate of the skies,
 Where high Olympus cloudy tops arise.
 The fire of Gods his awful silence broke;
 The heav'n's attentive trembled as he spoke.

Celestial states, immortal Gods! give ear,
 Hear our decree, and rev'rence what ye hear;
 The fix'd decree which not all heav'n can move;
 Thou fate! fulfil it; and, ye pow'rs! approve!
 What God but enters yon' forbidden field,
 Who yields assistance, or but wills to yield;

Homer, like most of the Greeks, is thought to have travelled into Ægypt, and brought from the priests there, not only their learning, but their manner of conveying it in fables and hieroglyphies. This is necessary to be considered by those who would thoroughly penetrate into the beauty and design of many parts of this author: for whoever reflects that this was the mode of learning in those times, will make no doubt but there are several mysteries both of natural and moral philosophy involved in his fictions, which otherwise in the literal meaning appear too trivial or irrational; and it is but just, when these are not plain or immediately intelligible, to imagine that something of this kind may be hid under them. Nevertheless, as Homer travelled not with a direct view of writing philosophy or theology, so he might often use these hieroglyphical fables and traditions as embellishments of his poetry only, without taking the pains to open their mystical meaning to his readers, and perhaps without diving very deeply into it himself.

Back to the skies with shame he shall be driv'n,
 Gash'd with dishonest wounds, the scorn of heav'n ;
 Or far, oh far from steep Olympus thrown, 15
 Low in the dark Tartarean gulf shall groan,
 With burning chains fix'd to the brazen floors,
 And lock'd by hell's inexorable doors ;

v. 16. *Low in the dark Tartarean gulf, etc.*] This opinion of Tartarus, the place of torture for the impious after death, might be taken from the Ægyptians : for it seems not improbable, as some writers have observed, that some tradition might then be spread in the eastern parts of the world, of the fall of the angels, the punishment of the damned, and other sacred truths which were afterwards more fully explained and taught by the prophets and apostles. These Homer seems to allude to in this and other passages ; as where Vulcan is said to be precipitated from heaven in the first book ; where Jupiter threatens Mars with Tartarus in the fifth, and where the dæmon of Discord is cast out of heaven in the nineteenth. Virgil has translated a part of these lines in the sixth Æneid.

—————*Tum Tartarus ipse*
Bis patet in præceps tantum, tenditque sub umbras
Quantus ad æthereum cæli suspectus Olympum.

And Milton in his first book.

As far remov'd from God and light of heav'n,
As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole.

It may not be unpleasing just to observe the gradation in these three great poets, as if they had vied with each other, in extending this idea of the depth of hell. Homer says as far, Virgil twice as far, Milton thrice.

As deep beneath th' infernal centre hurl'd,
 As from that centre to th' æthereal world. 20
 Let him who tempts me dread those dire abodes
 And know, th' almighty is the God of Gods.
 League all your forces then, ye pow'rs above,
 Join all, and try th' omnipotence of Jove :
 Let down our golden, everlasting chain, 25
 Whose strong embrace holds heav'n, and earth, and main :

v. 25. *Let down our golden, everlasting chain.*] The various opinions of the ancients concerning this passage are collected by Eustathius. Jupiter says, *If he holds this chain of gold, the force of all the Gods is unable to draw him down, but he can draw up them, the seas and the earth, and cause the whole universe to hang unactive.* Some think that Jupiter signifies the Æther, the golden chain the sun : if the Æther did not temper the rays of the sun as they pass through it, his beams would not only drink up and exhale the ocean in vapours, but also exhale the moisture from the veins of the earth, which is the cement that holds it together : by which means the whole creation would become unactive, and all its powers suspended.

Others affirm, that by this golden chain may be meant the days of the world's duration, *ἡμέρας αἰῶνος*, which are as it were painted by the lustre of the sun, and follow one another in a successive chain until they arrive at their final period : while Jupiter or the Æther (which the ancients called the soul of all things) still remains unchanged.

Plato in his *Theætetus* says, that by this golden chain is meant the sun, whose rays enliven all nature, and cement the parts of the universe.

The Stoics will have it, that by Jupiter is implied destiny, which over-rules every thing both upon and above the earth.

Others

Strive all, of mortal and immortal birth,
 To drag, by this, the thund'rer down to earth :
 Ye strive in vain ! if I but stretch this hand,
 I heave the Gods, the Ocean, and the land ; 30
 I fix the chain to great Olympus, height,
 And the vast world hangs trembling in my sight !
 For such I reign, unbounded and above ;
 And such are men, and gods, compar'd to Jove.
 Th' Almighty spoke, nor durst the pow'rs reply, 35
 A rev'rend horror silenc'd all the sky ;

Others (delighted with their own conceits) imagine that Homer intended to represent the excellence of monarchy ; that the sceptre ought to be swayed by one hand, and that all the wheels of government should be put in motion by one person.

But I fancy a much better interpretation may be found for this, if we allow (as there is great reason to believe) that the Ægyptians understood the true system of the world, and that Pythagoras first learned it from them. They held that the planets were kept in their orbits by gravitation upon the sun, which was therefore called *Jovis carcer* ; and sometimes by the sun (as Macrobius informs us) is meant Jupiter himself : we see too that the most prevailing opinion of antiquity fixes it to the sun ; so that I think it will be no strained interpretation to say, that by the inability of the Gods to pull Jupiter out of his place with this Catena, may be understood the superior attractive force of the sun, whereby he continues unmoved, and draws all the rest of the planets toward him.

v. 35. *Th' Almighty spoke.*] Homer in this whole passage plainly shews his belief of one supreme, omnipotent God, whom he introduces with a majesty and superiority worthy the great ruler of the universe. Ac-

Trembling they stood before their sov'reign's look ;
At length his best-belov'd, the pow'r of Wisdom, spoke.

O first and greatest ! God, by Gods ador'd !

We own thy might; our father and our Lord ! 40

But ah ! permit to pity human state :

If not to help, at least lament their fate.

From fields forbidden we submit refrain,

With arms unaiding mourn our Argives slain ;

Yet grant my counsels still their breasts may move, 45

Or all must perish in the wrath of Jove.

The cloud-compelling God her suit approv'd,

And smil'd superior on his best-belov'd.

cordingly Justin Martyr cites it as a proof of our author's attributing the power and government of all things to one first God, whose divinity is so far superior to all other deities, that if compared to him, they may be ranked among mortals. *Admon. ad gentes.* Upon this account, and with the authority of that learned father, I have ventured to apply to Jupiter in this place such appellatives as are suitable to the supreme deity: a practice I would be cautious of using in many other passages, where the notions and descriptions of our author must be owned to be unworthy of the divinity.

[v 39. *Ob first and greatest ! etc.*] Homer is not only to be admired for keeping up the characters of his heroes, but for adapting the speeches to the characters of his gods. Had Juno here given the reply, she would have begun with some mark of resentment, but Pallas is all submission; Juno would probably have contradicted him, but Pallas only begs leave to be sorry for those whom she must not assist; Juno would have spoken with the prerogative of a wife, but Pallas makes her address with the obsequiousness of a prudent daughter. Eustathius.

Then call'd his courfers, and his chariot took;
 The stedfast firmament beneath: them shook: 50
 Rapt by th' æthereal steeds the chariot roll'd;
 Brass were their hoofs, their curling manes of gold.
 Of heav'ns undrossy gold the God's array
 Refulgent, flash'd intolerable day.
 High on the throne he shines: his courfers fly 55
 Between th' extended earth and starry sky.
 But when to Ida's topmost height he came.
 (Fair nurse of fountains, and of savage game)
 Where o'er her pointed summits proudly rais'd,
 His fane breath'd odours, and his altar blaz'd: 60
 There, from his radiant car, the sacred fire
 Of Gods and men releas'd the steeds of fire:
 Blue ambient mists th' immortal steeds embrac'd;
 High on the cloudy point his feat he plac'd;
 Thence his broad eye the subject world surveys, 65
 The town, and tents, and navigable seas.
 Now had the Grecians snatch'd a short repaste,
 And buckled on their shining arms with haste.
 Troy rouz'd as soon; for on this dreadful day
 The fate of fathers, wives, and infants lay. 70

v. 69. *For on this dreadful day the fate of fathers, wives, and infants lay.*] It may be necessary to explain, why the Trojans thought themselves obliged to fight in order to defend their wives and children. One would think they might have kept within their walls; the Grecians made no attempt to batter them, neither were they invested: and the country was open on all sides except towards the sea, to give them provisions. The

The gates unfolding pour forth all their train ;
 Squadrons on squadrons cloud the dusky plain :
 Men, steeds and chariots shake the trembling ground ;
 The tumult thickens, and the skies resound.
 And now with shouts the shocking armies clos'd, 75
 To lances lances, shields to shields oppos'd,
 Host against host with shadowy legions drew,
 The founding darts in iron tempests flew,
 Victors and vanquish'd join promiscuous cries,
 Triumphant shouts and dying groans arise ; 80
 With streaming blood the slipp'ry fields are dy'd,
 And slaughter'd heroes swell the dreadful tide.

most natural thought is, that they and their auxiliaries being very numerous, could not subsist but from a large country about them ; and perhaps not without the sea, and the rivers, where the Greeks encamped ; that in time the Greeks would have surrounded them, and blocked up every avenue to their town : that they thought themselves obliged to defend the country with all the inhabitants of it, and that indeed at first this was rather a war between two nations, and became not properly a siege until afterwards.

v. 71. *The gates unfolding, etc.*] There is a wonderful sublimity in these lines ; one sees in the description the gates of a warlike city thrown open, and an army pouring forth ; and hears the trampling of men and horses rushing to battle.

These verses are, as Eustathius observes, only a repetition of a former passage ; which shews that the poet was particularly pleased with them, and that he was not ashamed of a repetition, when he could not express the same image more happily than he had already done.

Long as the morning beams increasing bright,
 O'er heav'n's clear azure spread the sacred light;
 Commutual death the fate of war confounds, 85
 Each adverse battle goar'd with equal wounds.
 But when the sun the height of heav'n ascends;
 The fire of gods his golden scales suspends,

v. 84. *The sacred light.*] Homer describing the advance of the day from morning until noon, calls it *ιερόν*, or sacred, says Eustathius, who gives this reason for it, because that part of the day was allotted to sacrifice and religious worship.

v. 88. *The fire of gods his golden scales suspends.*] This figure, representing God as weighing the destinies of men in his balances was first made use of in holy writ. In the book of Job, which is acknowledged to be one of the most ancient of the scriptures, he prays to be *weighed in an even balance, that God may know his integrity*. Daniel declares from God to Belshazzar, *thou art weighed in the balances, and found light*. And Proverbs, ch. 16. v. 11. *A just weight and balance are the Lord's*. Our author has it again in the twenty-second Iliad, and it appeared so beautiful to succeeding poets, that Æschylus (as we are told by Plutarch de aud. Poetis) writ a whole tragedy upon this foundation, which he called *Psychostasia*, or *the weighing of souls*. In this he introduced Thetis and Aurora standing on either side of Jupiter's scale, and praying each for her son while the heroes fought.

Καὶ τότε δὴ χρύσεια πατὴρ ἐτίθειν τάλαντα,
 Ἐν δ' ἐτίθει δὺο κῆρε τανηληγέος θανάτοιο,
 Ἐλκε δὲ μέισσα λαβόν· ῥέπε δ' Ἐκτορος ἄσιμον ἥμαρ.

It has been copied by Virgil in the last Æneid.

With equal hand: in these explor'd the fate
Of Greece and Troy, and pois'd the mighty weight. 90

*Jupiter ipse duas æquato examine lances -
Sustinet, et fata imponit diversa duorum:
Quem damnet labor, et quo vergat pondere lethum.*

I cannot agree with madam Dacier that those verses are inferior to Homer's; but Macrobius observes with some colour, that the application of them is not so just as in our author; for Virgil had made Juno say before, that Turnus would certainly perish.

*Nunc juvenem imparibus video concurrere fatis,
Parcarumque dies et vis inimica propinquat.*

So that there was less reason for weighing his fate with that of Æneas after that declaration. Scaliger trifles miserably, when he says, Juno might have learned this from the fates, though Jupiter did not know it, before he consulted them by weighing the scales. But Macrobius's excuse in behalf of Virgil is much better worth regard: I shall transcribe it entire, as it is perhaps the finest period in that author. *Hæc et alia ignoscenda Virgilio, qui studii circa Homerum nimietate excedit modum. Et revera non poterat non in aliquibus minor videri, qui per omnem poesim suam hoc uno est præcipue usus archetypo. Arciter enim in Homerum oculos intendit, ut oemularetur ejus non modo magnitudinem sed et simplicitatem et præsentiam orationis, et tacitam majestatem. Hinc diversarum inter heroas suas personarum varia magnificatio, hinc Deorum interpositio, hinc autoritas fabulosa, hinc affectuum naturalium expressio, hinc monumentorum persecutio, hinc parabolarum exaggeratio, hinc torrentis orationis sonitus, hinc rerum singularum cum splendore fastigium. Sat. l. 5. c. 13.*

As to the ascent or descent of the scales, Eustathius explains it in this manner. The descent of the scale

Prefs'd with it's load, the Grecian balance lies
Low sunk on earth, the Trojan strikes the skies.

toward earth signifies unhappiness and death, the earth being the place of misfortune and mortality; the mounting of it signifies prosperity and life, the superior regions being the seats of felicity and immortality.

Milton has admirably improved upon this fine fiction, and with an alteration agreeable to a Christian poet. He feigns that the Almighty weighed Satan in such scales, but judiciously makes this difference, that the mounting of his scale denoted ill success; whereas the same circumstance in Homer points the victory. His reason was, because Satan was immortal, and therefore the sinking of his scale could not signify death, but the mounting of it did his *lightness*, conformable to the expression we just now cited from Daniel.

*Th' Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in heaven his golden scales, yet seen
Between Astræa and the Scorpion sign;
Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
The pendulous round earth, with balanc'd air,
In counterpoise; now ponders all events,
Battles and realms; in these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of fight:
The latter quick up-flew, and kick'd the beam.*

I believe upon the whole this may with justice be preferred both to Homer's and Virgil's, on account of the beautiful allusion to the sign of Libra in the heavens. and that noble imagination of the Maker's weighing the whole world at the creation, and all the events of it since; so correspondent at once to philosophy, and to the style of the scriptures.

Then Jove from Ida's top his horrors spreads;
 The clouds burst dreadful o'er the Grecian heads;
 Thick light'nings flash; the mutt'ring thunder rolls; 95
 Their strength he withers, and unmans their souls.

v. 93. *Then Jove from Ida's top, etc.*] This distress of the Greeks being supposed, Jupiter's presence was absolutely necessary to bring them into it: for the inferior gods that were friendly to Greece were rather more in number and superior in force to those that favoured Troy; and the poet had shewed before, when both armies were left to themselves, that the Greeks could overcome the Trojans; besides, it would have been an indelible reflection upon his countrymen to have been vanquished by a smaller number. Therefore nothing less than the immediate interposition of Jupiter was requisite, which shews the wonderful address of the poet in his machinery. Virgil makes Turnus say in the last Æneid,

————— *Dii me terrent et Jupiter hostis.*

And indeed this defeat of the Greeks seems more to their glory than all their victories, since even Jupiter's omnipotence could with difficulty effect it.

v. 95. *Thick lightnings flash.*] This notion of Jupiter's declaring against the Greeks by thunder and lightning, is drawn (says Dacier) from truth itself: 1 Sam. ch. 7. *And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel.* To which may be added, that in the 18th Psalm: *The Lord thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail-stones and coals of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows and scattered them; he shot out lightnings and discomfited them.*

Upon occasion of the various successes given by Ju-

Before his wrath the trembling hosts retire;
The God in terrors, and the skies on fire.

Jupiter, now to Grecians, now to Trojans, whom he suffers to perish interchangeably; some have fancied this supposition injurious to the nature of the sovereign being, as representing him variable or inconstant in his rewards and punishments. It may be answered, that as God makes use of some people to chastise others, and none are totally void of crimes, he often decrees to punish those very persons for lesser sins, whom he makes his instruments to punish others for greater: so purging them from their own iniquities before they become worthy to be chastisers of other men's. This is the case of the Greeks here, whom Jupiter permits to suffer many ways, though he had destined them to revenge the rape of Helen upon Troy. There is a history in the Bible just of this nature. In the 20th chapter of Judges, the Israelites are commanded to make war against the tribe of Benjamin, to punish a rape on the wife of a Levite committed in the city of Gibeah: when they have laid siege to the place, the Benjamites sally upon them with so much vigour, that a great number of the besiegers are destroyed: they are astonished at these defeats, as having undertaken the siege in obedience to the command of God: but they are still ordered to persist, until at length they burn the city, and almost extinguish the race of Benjamin. There are many instances in scripture, where heaven is represented to change its decrees according to the repentance or relapses of men: Hezekias is ordered to prepare for death, and afterwards fifteen years are added to his life. It is foretold to Achab, that he should perish miserably, and then upon his humiliation God defers the punishment until the reign of his successor, *etc.*

I must confess, that in comparing passages of the sacred books with our author, one ought to use a great deal of caution and respect. If there are some places in scripture

Nor great Idomeneus that fight could bear,
 Nor each stern Ajax, thunderbolts of war: 100
 Nor he, the king of men, th' alarm sustain'd;
 Nestor alone amidst the storm remain'd.
 Unwilling he remain'd, for Paris' dart
 Had pierc'd his courser in a mortal part;
 Fix'd in the forehead where the springing mane 105
 Curl'd o'er the brow, it stung him to the brain:
 Mad with his anguish, he begins to rear,
 Paw with his hoofs aloft, and lash the air,
 Scarce had his faulchion cut the reins, and freed
 Th' incumber'd chariot from the dying steed, 110
 When dreadful Hector, thund'ring thro' the war,
 Pour'd to the tumult on his whirling car.
 That day had stretch'd beneath his matchless hand
 The hoary monarch of the Pylian band,
 But Diomed beheld; from forth the croud 115
 He rush'd, and on Ulysses call'd aloud.

that in compliance to human understanding represent the deity as acting by motives like those of men; there are infinitely more that shew him as he is, all perfection, justice, and beneficence; whereas in Homer the general tenor of the poem represents Jupiter as a being subject to passion, inequality, and imperfection. I think M. Dacier has carried these comparisons too far, and is too zealous to defend him upon every occasion in the points of theology and doctrine.

v. 115. *But Diomed beheld.*] The whole following story of Nestor and Diomed is admirably contrived to raise the character of the latter. He maintains his intrepidity, and ventures singly to bring off the old hero;

Whither, Oh whither does Ulysses run?
Oh flight unworthy great Laertes' son!
Mix'd with the vulgar shall thy fate be found,
Pierc'd in the back, a vile dishonest wound?
Oh turn and save from Hector's direful rage
The glory of the Greeks, the Pylian sage.

120

notwithstanding the general consternation. The art of Homer will appear wonderful to any one who considers all the circumstances of this part, and by what degrees he reconciles this flight of Diomed to that undaunted character. The thunderbolt falls just before him; that is not enough; Nestor advises him to submit to heaven; this does not prevail, he cannot bear the thoughts of flight: Nestor drives back the chariot without his consent; he is again inclined to go on until Jupiter again declares against him. These two heroes are very artfully placed together, because none but a person of Nestor's authority and wisdom could have prevailed upon Diomed to retreat: a younger warrior could not so well in honour have given him such counsel, and from no other would he have taken it. To cause Diomed to fly, required both the counsel of Nestor, and the thunder of Jupiter.

v. 121. *Oh turn and save. etc.*] There is a decorum in making Diomed call Ulysses to the assistance of his brother sage; for who better knew the importance of Nestor, than Ulysses? But the question is, whether Ulysses did not drop Nestor, as one great minister would do another, and fancied he should be the wise man when the other was gone? Eustathius indeed is of opinion that Homer meant not to cast any aspersions on Ulysses, nor would he have given him so many noble appellations when in the same breath he reflected upon his courage. But perhaps the contrary opinion may not be ill grounded, if we observe the manner of Homer's expression.

His fruitless words are lost unheard in air,
Ulysses seeks the ships, and shelters there.

But bold Tydides to the rescue goes, 125

A single warrior 'midst a host of foes ;

Before the coursers with a sudden spring

He leap'd, and anxious thus bespoke the king.

Great perils, father ! wait th' unequal fight ;

These younger champions will oppress thy might. 130

Thy veins no more with ancient vigour glow,

Weak is thy servant, and thy coursers slow.

Then haste, ascend my seat, and from the car

Observe the steeds of Tros, renown'd in war,

Practis'd alike to turn, to stop, to chace, 135

To dare the fight, or urge the rapid race :

These late obey'd Æneas' guiding rein ;

Leave thou thy chariot to our faithful train :

With these against yon' Trojans will we go,

Nor shall great Hector want an equal foe ; 140

Fierce as he is, ev'n he may learn to fear

The thirsty fury of my flying spear.

Diomed called Ulysses, but Ulysses was deaf, he *did not hear* ; and whereas the poet says of the rest, that they had not the *hardiness* to stay, Ulysses is not only said to *fly*, but *παρῆλθεν*, to make *violent haste* towards the navy. Ovid at least understood it thus, for he puts an objection in Ajax's mouth, *Metam.* 13. drawn from this passage, which would have been improper, had not Ulysses made more speed than he ought ; since Ajax on the same occasion retreated as well as he.

v. 142. *The thirsty fury of my flying spear.*] Homer has figures of that boldness which it is impossible to preserve

Thus said the chief; and Nestor, skill'd in war,
 Approves his counsel, and ascends the car;
 The steeds he left, their trusty servants hold; 145
 Eurymedon, and Sthenelus the bold.
 The rev'rend charioteer directs the course,
 And strains his aged arm to lash the horse.
 Hector they face; unknowing how to fear,
 Fierce he drove on; Tydides whirl'd his spear. 150
 The spear with erring haste mistook its way,
 But plung'd in Eniopeus' bosom lay.
 His opening hand in death forsakes the rein;
 The steeds fly back: he falls, and spurns the plain.
 Great Hector sorrows for his servant kill'd, 155
 Yet unreveng'd permits to press the field;
 'Till to supply his place and rule the car,
 Rose Archeptolemus, the fierce in war.
 And now had death and horror cover'd all;
 Like tim'rous flocks the Trojans in their wall 160

preserve in another language. The words in the original are *Δόρυ μαινέται*, *Hector shall see if my spear is mad in my hands*. The translation pretends only to have taken some shadow of this, in animating the spear, giving it *fury*, and strengthening the figure with the epithet *thirsty*.

v. 159. *And now had death, etc.*] Eustathius observes how wonderfully Homer still advances the character of Diomed: when all the leaders of Greece were retreated, the poet says that had not Jupiter interposed, Diomed alone had driven the whole Trojan army to their walls, and with his single hand have vanquished an army.

Inclos'd had bled : but Jove with awful sound
 Roll'd the big thunder o'er the vast profound :
 Fall in Tydides' face the lightning flew ;
 The ground before him flam'd with sulphur blue :

τ. 164. *The ground before him flam'd.*] Here is a battle described with so much fire, that the warmest imagination of an able painter cannot add a circumstance to heighten the surprize or horror of the picture. Here is what they call the Fracas, or hurry and tumult of the action in the utmost strength of colouring, upon the fore-ground ; and the repose or solemnity at a distance, with great propriety and judgment. First, in the Eloignement, we behold Jupiter in golden armour, surrounded with glory, upon the summit of mount Ida ; his chariot and horses by him, wrapt in dark clouds. In the next place below the horizon, appear the clouds rolling and opening, through which the lightning flashes in the face of the Greeks, who are flying on all sides ; Agamemnon and the rest of the commanders in the rear, in postures of astonishment. Towards the middle of the piece, we see Nestor in the utmost distress, one of his horses having a deadly wound in the forehead with a dart, which makes him rear and writhe, and disorder the rest. Nestor is cutting the harness with his sword, while Hector advances driving full speed. Diomed interposes, in an action of the utmost fierceness and intrepidity : these two heroes make the principal figures and subject of the picture. A burning thunderbolt falls just before the feet of Diomed's horses, from whence a horrid flame of sulphur rises

This is only a specimen of a single picture designed by Homer, out of the many with which he has beautified the Iliad. And indeed every thing is so natural and so lively, that the history painter would generally have no more to do, but to delineate the forms, and copy the circumstances, just as he finds them described

Book VIII. H O M E R's I L I A D. 123

The quiv'ring steeds fell prostrate at the sight; 165

And Nestor's trembling hand confess'd his fright;

He dropt the reins; and shook with sacred dread;

Thus, turning, warn'd th'intrepid Diomed.

O chief! too daring in thy friend's defence,

Retire advis'd, and urge the chariot hence. 170

This day, averse, the sov'reign of the skies

Assists great Hector, and our palm denies.

Some other sun may see the happier hour,

When Greece shall conquer by his heav'nly pow'r.

'Tis not in man his fix'd decree to move: 175

The great will glory to submit to Jove.

O rev'rend prince! (Tydides thus replies)

Thy years are awful, and thy words are wise.

Bat ah, what grief! should haughty Hector boast,

I fled inglorious to the guarded coast. 180

Before that dire disgrace shall blast my fame,

O'erwhelm me, earth; and hide a warrior's shame.

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus reply'd;

Gods! can thy courage fear the Phrygian's pride?

Hector may vaunt, but who shall heed the boast? } 185

Not those who felt thy arm, the Dardan host,

Nor Troy, yet bleeding in her heroes lost;

Not ev'n a Phrygian dame, who dreads the sword

That laid in dust her lov'd, lamented lord.

by this great master. We cannot therefore wonder at what has been so often said of Homer's furnishing ideas to the most famous painters of antiquity.

He said, and hasty, o'er the gasping throng 190
 Drives the swift steeds; the chariot smokes along.
 The shout of Trojans thicken in the wind;
 The storm of hissing jav'ins pours behind.
 Then with a voice that shakes the solid skies,
 Pleas'd Hector braves the warrior as he flies. 195
 Go, mighty hero! grac'd above the rest
 In seats of council and the sumptuous feast:
 Now hope no more those honours from thy train;
 Go, less than woman, in the form of man!
 To scale our walls, to wrap our tow'rs in flames, 200
 To lead in exile the fair Phrygian dames,
 Thy once proud hopes, presumptuous prince! are fled;
 This arm shall reach thy heart, and stretch thee dead.

Now fears dissuade him, and now hopes invite,
 To stop his coursers, and to stand the fight; 205
 Thrice turn'd the chief, and thrice imperial Jove
 On Ida's summits thunder'd from above.
 Great Hector heard; he saw the flashing light,
 (The sign of conquest) and thus urg'd the fight.
 Hear, ev'ry Trojan, Lycian, Dardan band, 210
 All fam'd in war, and dreadful hand to hand.

v. 194. *The solid skies.*] Homer sometimes calls the heavens *brazen*, Οὐραὶὸν πολύχαλκον, and Jupiter's palace, χαλκοβατὲς δῶ. One might think from hence that the notion of the *solidity of the heavens*, which is indeed very ancient, had been generally received. The scripture uses expressions agreeable to it, *A heaven of brass*, and the *firmament*.

Be mindful of the wreathes your arms have won,
 Your great forefathers glories, and your own.
 Heard ye the voice of Jove? success and fame
 Await on Troy, on Greece eternal shame. 215
 In vain they skulk behind their boasted wall,
 Weak bulwarks ! destin'd by this arm to fall.
 High o'er their slighted trench our steeds shall bound,
 And pass victorious o'er the levell'd mound.
 Soon as before yon' hollow ships we stand, 220
 Fight each with flames, and tofs the blazing brand ;
 'Till their proud navy wrapt in smoke and fires,
 All Greece, encompass'd, in one blaze expires.
 Furious he said ; then bending o'er the yoke,
 Encourag'd his proud steeds, while thus he spoke. 225
 Now Xanthus, Æthon, Lampus ! urge the chace,
 And thou, Podargus ! prove thy gen'rous race :

v. 214. *Heard ye the voice of Jove ?*] It was a noble and effectual manner of encouraging the troops, by telling them that God was surely on their side : this, it seems, has been an ancient practice, as it has been used in modern times by those who never read Homer.

v. 226. *Now Xanthus, Æthon, etc.*] There have been critics who blame this manner, introduced by Homer and copied by Virgil, of making a hero address his discourse to his horses. Virgil has given human sentiments to the horse of Pallas, and made him weep for the death of his master. In the tenth Æneid, Mezentius speaks to his horse in the same manner as Hector does here. Nay, he makes Turnus utter a speech to his spear, and invoke it as a divinity. All this is agreeable to the art of oratory, which makes it a precept to speak to every thing, and make every thing speak ; of which

Be fleet, be fearless, this important day,
 And all your master's well-spent care repay.
 For this, high fed in plenteous stalls ye stand, 230
 Serv'd with pure wheat, and by a princess' hand;
 For this my spouse of great Action's line
 So oft' has steep'd the strength'ning grain in wine.
 Now swift pursue, now thunder uncontroll'd;
 Give me to seize rich Nestor's shield of gold; 235

there are innumerable applauded instances in the most celebrated orators. Nothing can be more spirited and affecting than this enthusiasm of Hector, who in the transport of his joy at the sight of Diomed flying before him, breaks out into this apostrophe to his horses, as he is pursuing. And indeed the air of this whole speech is agreeable to a man drunk with the hopes of success, and promising himself a series of conquests. He has in imagination already forced the Grecian retrenchments, set the fleet in flames, and destroyed the whole army.

v. 232. *For this my spouse.*] There is, says M. Dacier, a secret beauty in this passage, which perhaps will only be perceived by those who are particularly versed in Homer. He describes a princess so tender in her love to her husband, that she takes care constantly to go and meet him at his return from every battle; and in the joy of seeing him again, runs to his horses, and gives them bread and wine as a testimony of her acknowledgement to them for bringing him back. Notwithstanding the raillery that may be cast upon this remark, I take a lady to be the best judge to what actions a woman may be carried by fondness to her husband. Homer does not expressly mention bread, but wheat; and the commentators are not agreed whether she gave them wine to drink or steeped the grain in it. Hobbes translates it as I do.

From Tydeus' shoulders strip the costly load,

Vulcanian arms, the labour of a God :

These if we gain, then victory, ye pow'rs !

This night, this glorious night, the fleet is ours.

That heard, deep anguish stung Saturnia's soul ; 240

She shook her throne that shook the starry pole :

And thus to Neptune : Thou, whose force can make

The steadfast earth from her foundations shake,

See'st thou the Greeks by fates unjust oppress'd,

Nor swells thy heart in that immortal breast ? 245

Yet Ægæ, Helice, thy pow'r obey,

And gifts unceasing on thine altars lay.

Would all the deities of Greece combine,

In vain the gloomy thund'rer might repine :

Sole should he sit, with scarce a God to friend, 250

And see his Trojans to the shades descend :

Such be the scene from his Idæan bow'r ;

Ungrateful prospect to the fullen pow'r !

Neptune with wrath rejects the rash design :

What rage, what madness, furious queen, is thine ? 255

v. 237. *Vulcanian arms, the labour of a God.*] These were the arms that Diomed had received from Glaucus and a prize worthy Hector, being (as we are told in the sixth book) intirely of gold. I do not remember any other place where the shield of Nestor is celebrated by Homer.

v. 246. *Yet Ægæ, Helice.*] These were two cities of Greece in which Neptune was particularly honoured, and in each of which there was a temple and a statue of him.

I war not with the highest. All above
Submit and tremble at the hand of Jove.

Now godlike Hector, to whose matchless might
Jove gave the glory of the destin'd fight,
Squadrons on squadrons drives, and fills the fields 260
With close-rang'd chariots, and with thicken'd shields.
Where the deep trench in length extended lay,
Compacted troops stand wedg'd in firm array,
A dreadful front! they shake the bands, and threat
With long-destroying flames the hostile fleet. 265
The king of men, by Juno's self inspir'd,
Toil'd thro' the tents, and all his army fir'd.
Swift as he mov'd, he lifted in his hand
His purple robe, bright ensign of command.,
High on the midmost bark the king appear'd; 270
There, from Ulysses' deck, his voice was heard.

v. 262. *Where the deep trench.*] That is to say, the space betwixt the ditch and the wall was filled with the men and chariots of the Greeks: Hector not having yet past the ditch. Eustathius.

v. 269. *His purple robe.*] Agamemnon here addresses himself to the eyes of the army; his voice might have been lost in the confusion of a retreat, but the motion of his purple robe could not fail of attracting the regards of the soldiers. His speech also is very remarkable; he first endeavours to shame them into courage, and then begs of Jupiter to give that courage success; at least so far as not to suffer the whole army to be destroyed. Eustathius.

v. 270. *High on the midmost bark, etc.*] We learn from hence the situation of the ships of Ulysses, Achilles and Ajax. The two latter being the strongest heroes

To Ajax and Achilles reach'd the sound,
 Whose distant ships the guarded navy bound.
 Oh Argives ! shame of human race ; he cry'd,
 (The hollow vessels to his voice reply'd) 275
 Where now are all your glorious boasts of yore,
 Your hasty triumphs on the Lemnian shore ?
 Each fearless hero dares an hundred foes,
 While the feast lasts, and while the goblet flows ;
 But who to meet one martial man is found, 280
 When the fight rages, and the flames surround ?
 O mighty Jove ! oh fire of the distress'd !
 Was ever king like me, like me oppress'd ?
 With pow'r immense, with justice arm'd in vain ;
 My glory ravish'd, and my people slain ! 285
 To thee my vows were breath'd from ev'ry shore ;
 What altar smok'd not with our victims gore ?
 With fat of bulls I fed the constant flame,
 And ask'd destruction to the Trojan name.
 Now gracious God ! far humbler our demand ; } 290
 Give these at least to 'scape from Hector's hand, }
 And save the reliëts of the Grecian land ! }
 Thus pray'd the king, and heav'n's great father heard
 His vows, in bitterness of soul preferr'd ;

of the army, were placed to defend either end of the fleet, as most obnoxious to the incursions, or surprizes of the enemy ; and Ulysses, being the ablest head, was allotted the middle place, as more safe and convenient for the council, and that he might be the nearer, if any emergency required his advice. Eustathius, Spondanus.

v. 293. *Thus pray'd the king, and heaven's great fa-*

The wrath appeas'd, by happy signs declares, 295
 And gives the people to their monarch's prayers.
 His eagle, sacred bird of heav'n! he sent,
 A fawn his talons trufs'd (divine portent!)

ther heard.] It is to be observed in general, that Homer hardly ever makes his heroes succeed, unless they have first offered a prayer to heaven. Whether they engage in war, go upon an embassy, undertake a voyage; in a word, whatever they enterprize, they almost always supplicate some God; and whenever we find this omitted, we may expect some adversity to befall them in the course of the story.

v. 287. *The eagle, sacred bird!*] Jupiter upon the prayers of Agamemnon sends an omen to encourage the Greeks. The application of it is obvious: the eagle signified Hector, the fawn denoted the fear and flight of the Greeks, and being dropt at the altar of Jupiter, shewed that they would be saved by the protection of that God. The word Πανομφαῖος (says Eustathius) has a great significancy in this place. The Greeks having just received this happy omen from Jupiter, were offering oblations to him under the title of the *father of oracles*. There may also be a natural reason for this appellation, as Jupiter signified the Æther, which is the vehicle of all sounds.

Virgil has a fine imitation of this passage, but diversified with many more circumstances, where he makes Juturna shew a prodigy of the like nature to encourage the Latins, Æn. 12.

*Namque volans rubra fulvus Jovis ales in æthra,
 Litoreas agitabat aves, turbamque sonantem
 Agminis aligeri: subito cum lapsus ad undas
 Cycnum excellentem pedibus rapit improbus uncis.
 Arrexere animos Itali: cunctæque volucres
 Convertunt clamore fugam (mirabile visu)*

High o'er the wond'ring hosts he soar'd above,
 Who paid their vows to Panomphæan Jove ; 300
 Then let the prey before his altar fall ;
 The 'Greeks beheld, and transport seiz'd on all :
 Encourag'd by the sign, the troops revive,
 And fierce on Troy, with doubled fury drive.
 Tydides first, of all the Grecian force, 305
 O'er the broad ditch impell'd his foaming horse,
 Pierc'd the deep ranks, their strongest battle tore,
 And dy'd his jav'lin red with Trojan gore.
 Young Agelaus (Phradmon was his sire)
 With flying coursers shun'd his dreadful ire : 310
 Strook thro' the back, the Phrygian fell oppress'd ;
 The dart drove on, and issued at his breast :
 Headlong he quits the car ; his arms resound :
 His pond'rous buckler thunders on the ground.
 Forth rush a tide of Greeks, the passage freed ; 315
 Th' Atridæ first, th' Ajaces next succeed :

*Ætheraque obscurant pennis, hostemque per auras
 Facta nube premunt : donec vi victus et ipso
 Pondere defecit, prædamque ex unguibus ales
 Projecit fluvio, penitusque in nubila fugit.*

v. 305. *Tydides first.*] Diomed, as we have before seen, was the last that retreated from the thunder of Jupiter ; he is now the first that returns to the battle. It is worth while to observe the behaviour of the hero upon this occasion : he retreats with the utmost reluctance, and advances with the utmost ardour ; he flies with greater impatience to meet danger, than he could before to put himself in safety. Eustathius.

Meriones, like Mars, in arms renown'd,
 And godlike Idomen, now pass'd the mound;
 Evæmon's son next issues to the foe,
 And last, young Teucer with his bended bow. 320
 Secure behind the Telamonian shield
 The skilful archer wide survey'd the field,
 With ev'ry shaft some hostile victim slew,
 Then close beneath the sevenfold orb withdrew:
 The conscious infant so, when fear alarms, 325
 Retires for safety to the mother's arms.
 Thus Ajax guards his brother in the field,
 Moves as he moves, and turns the shining shield.
 Who first by Teucer's mortal arrows bled?
 Orsilochnus; then fell Ormenus dead: 330
 The godlike Lycophon next press'd the plain,
 With Chromius, Dætor, Ophelestes slain:

v. 321. *Secure behind the Telamonian shield.*] Eustathius observes that Teucer being an excellent archer, and using only the bow, could not wear any arms which would inumber him, and render him less expedite in his archery. Homer, to secure him from the enemy, represents him as standing behind Ajax's shield, and shooting from thence. Thus the poet gives us a new circumstance of a battle, and though Ajax achieves nothing himself, he maintains a superiority over Teucer: Ajax may be said to kill these Trojans with the arrows of Teucer.

There is also a wonderful tenderness in the simile with which he illustrates the retreat of Teucer behind the shield of Ajax; such tender circumstances soften the horrors of a battle, and diffuse a sort of serenity over the soul of the reader.

Bold Hamopaon breathless sunk to ground ;
 The bloody pile great Melanippus crown'd.
 Heaps fell on heaps, sad trophies of his art, 335
 A Trojan ghost attending ev'ry dart.
 Great Agamemnon views with joyful eye
 The ranks grow thinner as his arrows fly :
 Oh youth for ever dear ! (the monarch cry'd)
 Thus, always thus, thy early worth be try'd ; 340
 Thy brave example shall retrieve our host,
 Thy country's saviour, and thy father's boast !
 Sprung from an alien's bed thy fire to grace,
 The vigorous offspring of a stol'n embrace.
 Proud of his boy, he own'd the gen'rous flame, 345
 And the brave son repays his cares with fame.

v. 337. *Great Agamemnon views.*] Eustathius observes that Homer would here teach the duty of a general in a battle. He must observe the behaviour of his soldiers: he must honour the hero, reproach the coward, reduce the disorderly; and for the encouragement of the deserving, he must promise rewards, that desert in arms may not be paid with glory only.

v. 343. *Sprung from an alien's bed.*] Agamemnon here, in the height of his commendations of Teucer, tells him of this spurious birth: this (says Eustathius) was reckoned no disgrace among the ancients; nothing being more common than for heroes of old to take their female captives to their beds; and as such captives were then given for a reward of valour, and as a matter of glory, it could be no reproach to be descended from them. Thus Teucer (says Eustathius) was descended from Telamon and Hesiene the sister of Priam, a female captive.

Now hear a monarch's vow : If heav'n's high pow'rs
 Give me to raze Troy's long-defended tow'rs ;
 Whatever treasures Greece for me design,
 The next rich honorary gift be thine : 350
 Some golden tripod, or distinguish'd car,
 With courfers dreadful in the ranks of war,
 Or some fair captive whom thy eyes approve,
 Shall recompense the warrior's toils with love.

To this the chief : With praise the rest inspire, 355
 Nor urge a soul already fill'd with fire.

What strength I have, be now in battle try'd,
 'Till ev'ry shaft in Phrygian blood be dy'd.
 Since rallying from our wall we forc'd the foe,
 Still aim'd at Hector have I bent my bow : 360
 Eight forky arrows from this hand have fled,
 And eight bold heroes by their points lie dead :
 But sure some God denies me to destroy
 This fury of the field, this dog of Troy.

v. 364. *This dog of Troy.*] This is literal from the Greek, and I have ventured it, as no improper expression of the rage of Teucer, for having been so often disappointed in his aim, and of his passion against that enemy who had so long prevented all the hopes of the Grecians. Milton was not scrupulous of imitating even these, which the modern refiners call unmannerly strokes of our author, (who knew to what extremes human passions might proceed, and was not ashamed to copy them.) He has put this very expression into the mouth of God himself, who upon beholding the havock which *sin* and *death* made in the world, is moved in his indignation to cry out,

See with what heat these dogs of hell advance !

He said, and twang'd the string. The weapon flies 365
 At Hector's breast, and sings along the skies :
 He miss'd the mark ; but pierc'd Gorgythion's heart,
 And drench'd in royal blood the thirsty dart.
 (Fair Castianira, nymph of form divine,
 This offspring added to king Priam's line.) 370
 As full-blown poppies overcharg'd with rain
 Decline the head, and drooping kiss the plain ;

v. 367. *He miss'd the mark.*] These words, says Eustathius, are very artfully inserted : the reader might wonder why so skilful an archer should so often miss his mark, and it was necessary that Teucer should miss Hector, because Homer could not falsify the history : this difficulty he removes by the intervention of Apollo, who wasts the arrow aside from him : the poet does not tell us that this was done by the hand of a God, until the arrow of Teucer came so near Hector as to kill his charioteer, which made some such contrivance necessary.

v. 371. *As full-blown poppies.*] This simile is very beautiful, and exactly represents the manner of Gorgythion's death : there is such a sweetness in the comparison, that it makes us pity the youth's fall, and almost feel his wound. Virgil has applied it to the death of Euryalus.

—*Inque humeros cervix collapsa recumbit :
 Purpureus veluti cum flos succisus aratro
 Languescit moriens ; lassove papavera collo
 Demisere caput, pluvia cum sorte gravantur.*

This is finely improved by the Roman author, with the particulars of *succisus aratro*, and *lasso collo*. But it may on the other hand be observed in the favour of Homer,

So sinks the youth : his beauteous head, depressed
Beneath his helmet, drops upon his breast.

Another shaft the raging archer drew : 375

That other shaft with erring fury flew,
(From Hector Phœbus turn'd the flying wound)

Yet fell not dry or guiltless to the ground :

Thy breast, brave Archeptolemus ! it tore,

And dipt its feathers in no vulgar gore. 380

Headlong he falls : his sudden fall alarms

The steeds that startle at his sounding arms.

Hector with grief his charioteer beheld,

All pale and breathless on the sanguine field.

that the circumstance of the head being oppressed and weighed down by the helmet, is so remarkably just, that it is a wonder Virgil omitted it ; and the rather because he had particularly taken notice before, that it was the helmet of Euryalus which occasioned the discovery and unfortunate death of this young hero and his friend.

One may take a general observation, that Homer in those comparisons that breathe an air of tenderness, is very exact, and adapts them in every point to the subject which he is to illustrate : but in other comparisons, where he is to inspire the soul with sublime sentiments, he gives a loose to his fancy, and does not regard whether the images exactly correspond. I take the reason of it to be this : in the first, the copy must be like the original to cause it to affect us ; the glass needs only to return the real image to make it beautiful : whereas in the other, a succession of noble ideas will cause the like sentiments in the soul ; and though the glass should enlarge the image, it only strikes us with such thoughts as the poet intended to raise, sublime and great.

Book VIII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 137

Then bids Cebriones direct the rein, 385

Quits his bright car, and issues on the plain.

Dreadful he shouts; from earth a stone he took,

And rush'd on Teucer with the lifted rock.

The youth already strain'd the forceful yew;

The shaft already to his shoulder drew; 390

The feather in his hand, just wing'd for flight,

Touch'd where the neck and hollow chest unite;

There, where the juncture knits the channel bone,

The furious chief discharg'd the craggy stone:

The bow string burst beneath the pond'rous blow, 395

And his numb'd hand dismiss'd his useless bow.

He fell: but Ajax his broad shield display'd,

And screen'd his brother with a mighty shade;

'Till great Alastor, and Mecistheus, bore

The batter'd archer groaning to the shore. 400

Troy yet found grace before th'Olympian fire,

He arm'd their hands, and fill'd their breasts with fire.

The Greeks, repuls'd, retreat behind their wall,

Or in the trench on heaps confus'dly fall.

First of the foe great Hector march'd along, 405

With terror cloth'd, and more than mortal strong.

As the bold hound, that gives the lion chase,

With beating bosom, and with eager pace.

v. 407. *As the bold hound that gives the lion chase.*] This simile is the justest imaginable; and gives the most lively picture of the manner in which the Grecians fled, and Hector pursued them, still slaughtering the hindmost. Gratius and Oppian have given us particular descriptions

Hangs on his haunch, or fastens on his heels,
 Guards as he turns, and circles as he wheels: 410
 Thus oft' the Grecians turn'd, but still they flew;
 Thus following Hector still the hindmost flew.
 When flying they had past the trench profound,
 And many a chief lay gasping on the ground;
 Before the ships a desp'rate stand they made, 415
 And fir'd the troops, and call'd the gods to aid.
 Fierce on his rattling chariot Hector came;
 His eyes like Gorgon shot a sanguine flame
 That wither'd all their host: like Mars he stood,
 Dire as the monster, dreadful as the God! 420
 Their strong distress the wife of Jove survey'd;
 Then pensive thus, to-war's triumphant maid.

Oh daughter of that God, whose arm can wield
 Th' avenging bolt, and shake the fable shield!
 Now, in this moment of her last despair, 425
 Shall wretched Greece no more confess our care,

of those sort of dogs, of prodigious strength and size, which were employed to hunt and tear down wild beasts. To one of these fierce animals he compares Hector, and one cannot but observe his care not to disgrace his Grecian countrymen by an unworthy comparison: though he is obliged to represent them flying, he makes them fly like lions; and as they fly, turn frequently back upon their pursuer: so that it is hard to say, if they or he, be in the greater danger. On the contrary, when any of the Grecian heroes pursue the Trojans, it is he that is the lion, and the flyers are but sheep or trembling deer.

Condemn'd to suffer the full force of fate,
And drain the dregs of heav'n's relentless hate !
Gods ! shall one raging hand thus level all !
What numbers fell ? what numbers yet shall fall ? 430
What pow'r divine shall Hector's wrath assuage ?
Still swells the slaughter, and still grows the rage !
So spake th' imperial regent of the skies ;
To whom the goddess with the azure eyes :
Long since had Hector stain'd these fields with gore, 435
Stretch'd by some Argive on his native shore ;
But he above, the fire of heav'n, withstands,
Mocks our attempts, and flights our just demands.
The stubborn God, inflexible and hard,
Forgets my service and deserv'd reward, 440
Sav'd I, for this, his fav'rite * son distress'd,
By stern Euristheus with long labours press'd ?
He begg'd, with tears he begg'd, in deep dismay ;
I shot from heav'n, and gave his arm the day.

v. 439. *The stubborn God, inflexible, and hard.*] It must be owned that this speech of Minerva against Jupiter, shocks the allegory more than perhaps any in the poem. Unless the deities may sometimes be thought to mean no more than beings that presided over those parts of nature, or those passions and faculties of the mind. Thus as Venus suggests unlawful as well as lawful desires, so Minerva may be described as the goddess not only of wisdom but of craft, that is, both of true and false wisdom. So the moral of Minerva's speaking rashly of Jupiter, may be, that the wisest of finite beings is liable to passion and indiscretion, as the commentators have already observed.

* Hercules.

Oh had my wisdom known this dire event, 445
 When to grim Pluto's gloomy gates he went;
 The triple dog had never felt his chain,
 Nor Styx been cross'd, nor hell explor'd in vain.
 Averse to me of all his heav'n of Gods,
 At Thetis' suit the partial thund'rer nods. 550
 To grace her gloomy, fierce, resenting son,
 My hopes are frustrate, and my Greeks undone.
 Some future day, perhaps he may be mov'd
 To call his blue-ey'd maid his best belov'd.
 Hasten, launch thy chariot, thro' yon' ranks to ride; 455
 Myself will arm, and thunder at thy side.
 Then goddesses! say, shall Hector glory then,
 (That terror of the Greeks, that man of men)
 When Juno's self, and Pallas shall appear,
 All dreadful in the crimson walks of war! 460
 What mighty Trojan then, on yonder shore,
 Expiring, pale, and terrible no more,
 Shall feast the fowls, and glut the dogs with gore?
 She ceas'd, and Juno rein'd the steeds with care;
 (Heav'n's awful empress, Saturn's other heir) 465
 Pallas, meanwhile, her various veil unbound,
 With flow'rs adorn'd, with art immortal crown'd;

v. 461. *What mighty Trojan then, on yonder shore.*]
 She means Hector, whose death the poet makes her foresee in such a lively manner, as if the image of the hero lay bleeding before her. This picture is noble, and agreeable to the observation we formerly made of Homer's method of prophesying in the spirit of poetry.

The radiant robe her sacred fingers wove
 Floats in rich waves, and spreads the court of Jove.
 Her father's arms her mighty limbs invest, 470
 His cuirass blazes on her ample breast.
 The vig'rous pow'r the trembling car ascends ;
 Shook by her arm, the massy jav'lin bends ;
 Huge, pond'rous, strong ! that when her fury burns,
 Proud tyrants humbles, and whole hosts o'erturns. 475
 Saturnia lends the lash ; the coursers fly ;
 Smooth glides the chariot through the liquid sky.
 Heav'n gates spontaneous open to the pow'rs,
 Heav'n's golden gates, kept by the winged Hours,
 Commission'd in alternate watch they stand, 480
 The sun's bright portals and the skies command ;
 Close, or unfold, th' eternal gates of day,
 Bar heav'n with clouds, or roll these clouds away.
 The founding hinges ring, the clouds divide ;
 Prone down the steep of heav'n their course they guide.
 But Jove incens'd, from Ida's top survey'd, 486
 And thus injoin'd the many-colour'd maid.

v. 469. *Floats in rich waves.*] The Greek word is *κατέχευεν*, *pours* the veil on the pavement. I must just take notice that here is a repetition of the same beautiful verses which the author had used in the fifth book.

v. 477. *Smooth glides the chariot, etc.*] One would almost think Homer made his gods and goddesses descend from Olympus, only to mount again, and mount only to descend again, he is so remarkably delighted with the descriptions of their horses, and their manner of flight. We have no less than three of these in the present book.

Thaumantia ! mount the winds, and stop their car ;
 Against the highest who shall wage the war ?
 If furious yet they dare the vain debate, 490
 Thus have I spoke, and what I spake is fate.
 Their coursers crush'd beneath the wheels shall lie,
 Their car in fragments scatter'd o'er the sky ;
 My lightning these rebellious shall confound,
 And hurl them flaming, headlong to the ground, 495
 Condemn'd for ten revolving years to weep
 The wounds impress'd by burning thunder deep.
 So shall Minerva learn to fear our ire,
 Nor dare to combat her's and nature's fire.
 For Juno, headstrong and imperious still, 500
 She claims some title to transgress our will.
 Swift as the wind, the various-colour'd maid
 From Ida's top her golden wings display'd ;
 To great Olympus' shining gates she flies,
 There meets the chariots rushing down the skies, 505
 Restrains their progress from the bright abodes,
 And speaks the mandate of the fire of gods.

v. 500. *For Juno, headstrong and imperious still, she claims, etc.*] Eustathius observes here, if a good man does us a wrong, we are justly angry at it ; but if it proceeds from a bad one, it is no more than we expected, we are not at all surprized, and we bear it with patience.

There are many such passages as these in Homer, which glance obliquely at the fair sex ; and Jupiter is here forced to take upon himself the severe husband, to teach Juno the duty of a wife.

What frenzy, goddesses ! what rage can move
 Celestial minds to tempt the wrath of Jove ?
 Desist, obedient to his high command ; 510
 This is his word : and know his word shall stand.
 His lightning your rebellion shall confound,
 And hurl ye headlong, flaming to the ground :
 Your horses crush'd beneath the wheels shall lie,
 Your car in fragments scatter'd o'er the sky ; 515
 Yourselfs condemn'd ten rolling years to weep
 The wounds impress'd by burning thunder deep.
 So shall Minerva learn to fear his ire,
 Nor dare to combat her's and nature's fire.
 For Juno, headstrong and imperious still 520
 She claims some title to transgress his will :
 But thee what desp'rate insolence has driv'n,
 To lift thy lance against the king of heav'n ?
 Then mounting on the pinions of the wind,
 She flew ; and Juno thus her rage resign'd. 525

v. 522. *But thee what desp'rate insolence.*] It is observable that Homer generally makes his messengers, divine as well as human, very punctual in delivering their messages in the very words of the persons who commissioned them. Iris however in the close of her speech has ventured to go beyond her instructions. and all rules of decorum, by adding these expressions of bitter reproach to a goddess of superior rank. The words of the original, *Κύον ἀδδείς*, are too gross to be literally translated.

v. 525. *Juno her rage resign'd.*] Homer never intended to give us the picture of a good wife in the description of Juno : she obeys Jupiter, but it is a forced

O daughter of that God, whose arm can wield
 Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield !
 No more let beings of superior birth
 Contend with Jove for this low race of earth :
 Triumphant now, now miserably slain, 530
 They breathe or perish as the fates ordain.
 But Jove's high counsels full effect shall find,
 And ever constant, ever rule mankind.

She spoke, and backward turn'd her steeds of light,
 Adorn'd with manes of gold, and heav'nly bright 535
 The Hours unloos'd them, panting as they stood,
 And heap'd their mangers with ambrosial food.
 There ty'd, they rest in high celestial stalls ;
 The chariot propt against the crystal walls.

obedience: she submits rather to the governor than to the husband, and is more afraid of his lightning than his commands.

Her behaviour in this place is very natural to a person under a disappointment: she had set her heart upon preferring the Greeks, but failing in that point, she assumes an air of indifference, and says, whither they live or die, she is unconcerned.

v. 531. *They breathe or perish as the fates ordain.*] The translator has turned this line in compliance to an old observation upon Homer, which Macrobius has written, and several others have since fallen into: they say he was so great a fatalist, as not so much as to name the word *fortune* in all his works, but constantly *fate* instead of it. This remark seems curious enough, and indeed does agree with the general tenor and doctrine of this poet; but unluckily it is not true, the word which they have proscribed being implied in the original of this v. 430. "Ὅς κε τίχῃ.

Book VIII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 145

The pensive goddesses, abash'd, controul'd, 540

Mix with the Gods, and fill their seats of gold.

And now the Thund'rer meditates his flight

From Ida's summits to th'Olympian height.

Swifter than thought the wheels instinctive fly,

Flame thro' the vast of air, and reach the sky. 545

'Twas Neptune's charge his coursers to unbrace,

And fix the car on its immortal base;

There stood the chariot, beaming forth its rays,

'Till with a snowy veil he screen'd the blaze.

He, whose all-conscious eyes the world behold, 550

Th' eternal Thunderer, fate thron'd in gold.

High heav'n the footstool of his feet he makes,

And wide beneath him, all Olympus shakes.

Trembling afar th' offending pow'rs appear'd,

Confus'd and silent, for his frown they fear'd. 555

He saw their foul, and thus his word imparts :

Pallas and Juno ! say, why heave your hearts ?

Soon was your battle o'er : proud Troy retir'd

Before your face, and in your wrath expir'd.

But know, whoe'er almighty power withstand ! 560

Unmatch'd our force, unconquer'd is our hand :

v. 547. *And fix the car on its immortal base.*] It is remarked by Eustathius that the word *βασίς* signifies not only *altars*, but *pedestals* or *bases* of statues, *etc.* I think our language will bear this literally, though M. Dacier durst not venture it in the French. The solemnity with which this chariot of Jupiter is set up, by the hands of a God, and covered with a fine veil, makes it easy enough to imagine that this distinction also might be shewn it.

Who shall the sov'reign of the skies controul?

Not all the Gods that crown the starry pole.

Your hearts shall tremble, if our arms we take,

And each immortal nerve with horror shake. 565

For thus I speak, and what I speak shall stand;

What pow'r foe'er provokes our lifted hand,

On this our hill no more shall hold his place,

Cut off, and exil'd from th' æthereal race.

Juno and Pallas grieving hear the doom, 570

But feast their souls on Ilion's woes to come.

v. 570. *Juno and Pallas.*] In the beginning of this book Juno was silent, and Minerva replied: Here, says Eustathius, Homer makes Juno reply with great propriety to both their characters. Minerva resents the usage of Jupiter, but the reverence she bears to her father, and her king, keeps her silent; she has not less anger than Juno, but more reason. Minerva there spoke with all the submission and deference that was owing from a child to a father, or from a subject to a king; but Juno is more free with her husband, she is angry, and lets him know it by the first word she utters.

Juno here repeats the same words that had been used by Minerva to Jupiter near the beginning of this book. What is there uttered by wisdom herself, and approved by him, is here spoken by a goddess, who (as Homer tells us at this very time) imprudently manifested her passion, and whom Jupiter answers with anger. To deal fairly, I cannot defend this in my author, any more than some other of his repetitions; as when Ajax in the fifteenth Iliad, v. 668. uses the same speech, word for word, to encourage the Greeks, which Agamemnon had made in the fifth, v. 653. I think it equally an extreme, to vindicate all the repetitions of Homer, and to excuse none. However Eustathius very ingeniously excuses this, by saying

Tho' secret anger swell'd Minerva's breast,
 The prudent goddess yet her wrath repress:
 But Juno, impotent of rage, replies,
 What hast thou said, oh tyrant of the skies ! 575
 Strength and omnipotence invest thy throne ;
 'Tis thine to punish ; ours to grieve alone.
 For Greece we grieve, abandon'd by her fate,
 To drink the dregs of thy unmeasur'd hate :
 From fields forbidden we submit refrain, 580
 With arms unaiding see our Argives slain ;
 Yet grant our counsels still their breasts may move,
 Lest all should perish in the rage of Jove.

The goddess thus: and thus the god replies,
 Who swells the clouds, and blackens all the skies. 585
 The morning sun, awak'd by loud alarms,
 Shall see th' Almighty thunderer in arms.
 What heaps of Argives then shall load the plain,
 Those radiant eyes shall view, and view in vain.
 Nor shall great Hector cease the rage of fight, 590
 The navy flaming, and thy Greeks in flight.

that the same speeches become intirely different by the different manner of introducing them. Minerva address'd herself to Jupiter, with words full of respect, but Juno with terms of resentment. This, says he, shews the effect of opening our speeches with art: it prejudices the audience in our favour, and makes us speak to friends: whereas the auditor naturally denies that favour, which the orator does not seem to ask; so that what he delivers, though it has equal merit, labours under this disadvantage, that his judges are his enemies.

v. 590. *Nor shall great Hector cease, etc.*] Here,

Ev'n till the day, when certain fates ordain
 That stern Achilles (his Patroclus slain)
 Shall rise in vengeance, and lay waste the plain.
 For such is fate, nor can'st thou turn its course 595
 With all thy rage, with all thy rebel force.
 Fly, if thou wilt, to earth's remotest bound,
 Where on her utmost verge the seas resound;
 Where curst Iapetus and Saturn dwell,
 Fast by the brink, within the steams of hell; 600
 No sun e'er gilds the gloomy horrors there,
 No chearful gales refresh the lazy air;
 There arm once more the bold Titanian band;
 And arm in vain; for what I will, shall stand.
 Now deep in ocean sunk the lamp of light, 605
 And drew behind the cloudy veil of night:
 The conqu'ring Trojans mourn his beams decay'd;
 The Greeks rejoicing bless the friendly shade.
 The victors keep the field; and Hector calls
 A martial council near the navy walls: 610
 These to Scamander's bank apart he led,
 Where thinly scatter'd lay the heaps of dead.
 Th' assembled chiefs descending on the ground,
 Attend his order, and their prince surround.

says Eustathius, the poet prepares the reader for what is
 to succeed: he gives us the out-lines of his piece, which
 he is to fill up in the progress of the poem. This is so
 far from cloying the reader's appetite, that it raises it,
 and makes him desirous to see the picture drawn in its
 full length.

Book VIII. H O M E R's I L I A D. 149

A massy spear he bore of mighty strength, 615

Of full ten cubits was the lance's length;

The point was brass, refulgent to behold,

Fix'd to the wood with circling rings of gold :

The noble Hector on his lance reclin'd,

And bending forward, thus reveal'd his mind. 620

Ye valiant Trojans, with attention hear !

Ye Dardan bands, and gen'rous aids give ear !

This day, we hop'd, would wrap in conqu'ring flame

Greece with her ships, and crown our toils with fame :

But darkness now, to save the cowards, falls, 625

And guards them trembling in their wooden walls.

Obeys the night, and use her peaceful hours

Our steeds to forage, and refresh our pow'rs.

Strait from the town be sheep and oxen sought,

And strength'ning bread, and gen'rous wine be brought.

Wide o'er the field, high blazing to the sky, 631

Let num'rous fires the absent sun supply,

The flaming piles with plenteous fuel raise,

'Till the bright morn her purple beam displays ;

Lest in the silence and the shades of night, 635

Greece on her sable ships attempt her flight.

v. 621. *Ye valiant Trojans*, etc.] Eustathius observes that Hector here speaks like a soldier: he bears a spear, not a sceptre in his hand; he harangues like a soldier, but like a victor; he seems to be too much pleased with himself, and in this vein of self-flattery, he promises a compleat conquest over the Greeks.

Not unmolested let the wretches gain
 Their lofty decks, or safely cleave the main;
 Some hostile wound let ev'ry dart bestow,
 Some lasting token of the Phrygian foe, 640
 Wounds, that may long hence ask their spouses care,
 And warn their children from a Trojan war.
 Now thro' the circuit of our Ilian wall,
 Let sacred heralds sound the solemn call;
 To bid the fires with hoary honours crown'd, 645
 And beardless youths our battlements surround.
 Firm be the guard, while distant lie our pow'rs,
 And let the matrons hang with lights the tow'rs:
 Lest under covert of the midnight shade,
 'The insidious foe the naked town invade. 650
 Suffice, to-night, these orders to obey;
 A nobler charge shall rouse the dawning day.
 'The Gods, I trust, shall give to Hector's hand,
 From these detested foes to free the land,
 Who plow'd, with fates averse, the wat'ry way; 655
 For Trojan vultures a predestin'd prey.

v. 648. *And let the matrons.*] I have been more observant of the decorum in this line than my author himself. He calls the women *Θηλύτρουαι*, an epithet of scandalous import, upon which Porphyry and the Greek scholiast have said but too much. I know no man that has yet had the impudence to translate that remark, in regard of which it is politeness to imitate the barbarians, and say, *Græcum est, non legitur*. For my part, I leave it as a motive to some very curious persons of both sexes to study the Greek language.

Our common safety must be now the care ;
But soon as morning paints the fields of air,
Sheath'd in bright arms let ev'ry troop engage,
And the fir'd fleet behold the battle rage. 660
Then, then shall Hector and Tydides prove,
Whose fates are heaviest in the scale of Jove.
To-morrow's light (oh haste the glorious morn !)
Shall see his bloody spoils in triumph born,
With this keen jav'lin shall his breast be gor'd, 665
And prostrate heroes bleed around their lord.
Certain as this, oh ! might my days endure,
From age inglorious, and black death secure ;
So might my life and glory know no bound,
Like Pallas worshipp'd, like the sun renown'd ! 670
As the next dawn, the last they shall enjoy,
Shall crush the Greeks, and end the woes of Troy.

The leader spoke. From all his host around.
Shouts of applause along the shores resound.
Each from the yoke the smoking steeds unty'd, 675
And fix'd their headstalls to his chariot-side.
Fat sheep and oxen from the town are led,
With gen'rous wine, and all-sustaining bread.
Full hecatombs lay burning on the shore ;
The winds to heav'n the curling vapours bore. 680

v. 679. *Full hecatombs, etc.*] The six lines that follow, being a translation of four in the original, are added from the authority of Plato in Mr. Barnes his edition : that author cites them in his second Alcibiades. There is no doubt of their being genuine, but the question is

Ungrateful off'ring to th' immortal pow'rs !

Whose wrath hung heavy o'er the Trojan tow'rs ;

Nor Priam nor his sons obtain'd their grace ;

Proud Troy they hated, and her guilty race.

The troops exulting fate in order round, 685

And beaming fires illumin'd all the ground.

As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night :

O'er heav'n's clear azure spreads her sacred light,

When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,

And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene ; 690

Around her throne the vivid planets roll,

And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole ;

O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed ;

And tipt with silver ev'ry mountain's head ;

Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise. 695

A flood of glory bursts from all the skies :

only whether they are rightly placed here? I shall not pretend to decide upon a point which will doubtless be the speculation of future critics.

v. 687. *As when the moon, etc.*] This comparison is inferior to none in Homer. It is the most beautiful night-piece that can be found in poetry. He presents you with a prospect of the heavens, the seas, and the earth : the stars shine, the air is serene, the world enlightened, and the moon mounted in glory. Eustathius remarks that *φαινήν* does not signify the moon at full, for then the light of the stars is diminished or lost in the greater brightness of the moon. And others correct the word *φαινήν* to *φάει νήν*, for *φάει νήν* ; but this criticism is forced, and I see no necessity why the moon may not be said to be bright, though it is not in the full. A poet is not obliged to speak with the exactness of philosophy, but with the liberty of poetry.

The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,
Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light.
So many flames before proud Ilion blaze,
And lighten glimm'ring Xanthus with their rays: 700
The long reflections of the distant fires
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the spires.
A thousand piles the dusky horrors gild,
And shoot a shady lustre o'er the field.

v. 703. *A thousand piles.*] Homer in his catalogue of the Grecian ships, though he does not recount expressly the number of the Greeks, has given some hints from whence the sum of their army may be collected. But in the same book where he gives an account of the Trojan army, and relates the names of the leaders and nations of the auxiliaries, he says nothing by which we may infer the number of the army of the besieged. To supply therefore that omission, he has taken occasion by this piece of poetical arithmetic, to inform his reader, that the Trojan army amounted to 50,000. That the assistant nations are to be included herein, appears from what Dolon says in l. 106. that the auxiliaries were encamped that night with the Trojans.

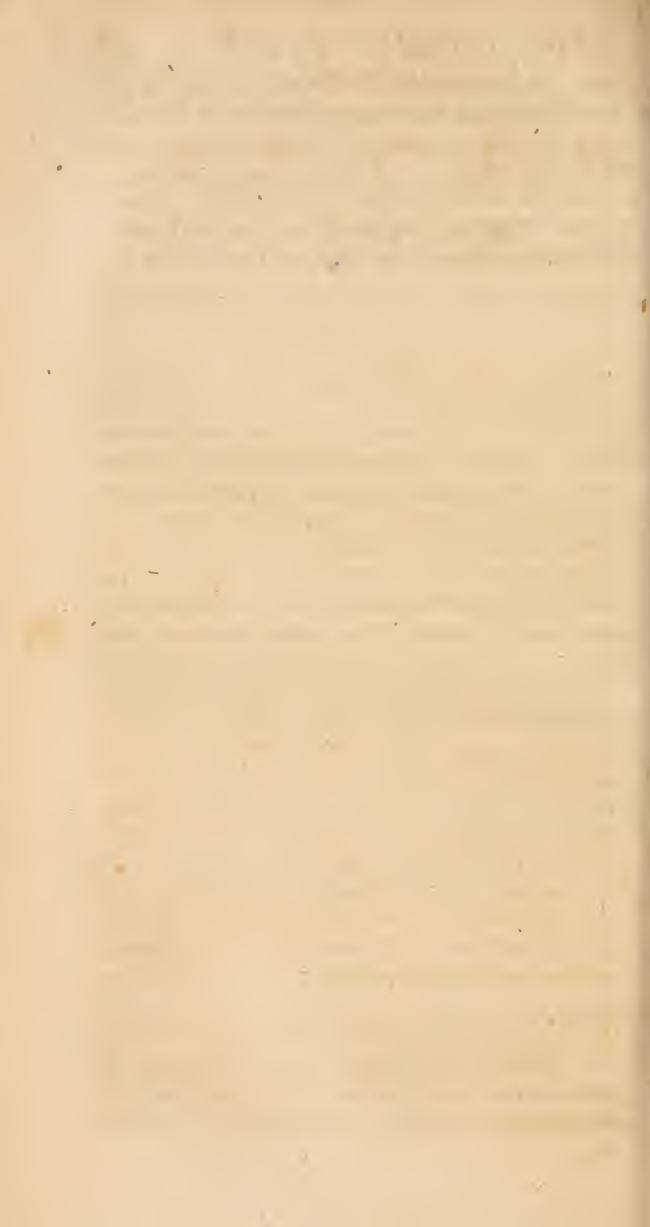
This passage gives me occasion to animadvert upon a mistake of a modern writer, and another of my own. The Abbe Teraſſon, in a late treatise against Homer, is under a grievous error, in saying that all the forces of Troy, and the auxiliaries cannot be reasonably supposed from Homer to be above ten thousand men. He had entirely overlooked this place, which says there were a thousand fires, and fifty men at each of them. See my observations on the second book where these fires by a slip of my memory are called funeral piles: I should be glad it were the greatest error I have committed in these notes.

Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend, 705
 Whose umber'd arms, by fits, thick flashes send.
 Loud neigh the courfers o'er their heaps of corn,
 And ardent warriors wait the rising morn.

v. 707. *The courfers o'er their heaps of corn.*] I durst not take the same liberty with madam Dacier, who has omitted this circumstance, and does not mention the horses at all. In the following line, the last of the book, Homer has given to the *morning* the epithet *fair-spher'd* or *bright-thron'd*, ἑσπεροῖον ἡῶ. I have already taken notice in the preface, of the method of translating the epithets of Homer, and must add here, that it is often only the uncertainty the moderns lie under, of the true genuine signification of an ancient word, which causes the many various constructions of it. So that it is probable the author's own words, at the time he used them, never meant half so many things as we translate them into. Madam Dacier generally observes one practice as to these throughout her version: she renders almost every such epithet in Greek by two or three in French, from a fear of losing the least part of its significance. This perhaps may be excusable in prose; though at best it makes the whole much more verbose and tedious, and is rather like writing a dictionary than rendering an author: but in verse, every reader knows such a redoubling of epithets would not be tolerable. A poet has therefore only to chuse that which most agrees with the tenor and main intent of the particular passage, or with the genius of poetry itself.

It is plain that too scrupulous an adherence to many of these, gives the translation an exotic, pedantic, and whimsical air, which it is not to be imagined the original ever had. To call a hero the *great artificer of flight*, the *swift of foot*, or the *horse-tamer*, these give us ideas of little peculiarities, when in the author's time they were epithets used only in general to signify alacrity, agility and

vigour. A common reader would imagine from these servile versions, that Diomed and Achilles were foot-racers, and Hector, a horse-courser, rather than that any of them were heroes. A man shall be called a faithful translator for rendering *πόδας ὠκὺς* in English, *swift footed*; but laughed at if he should translate our English word *dextrous* into any other language, *right-handed*.



T H E

I L I A D.

B O O K IX.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The embassy to Achilles.

AGAMEMNON, after the last day's defeat, proposes to the Greeks to quit the siege and return to their country. *Diomed* opposes this, and *Nestor* seconds him, praising his wisdom and resolution. He orders the guard to be strengthened, and a council summoned to deliberate what measures were to be followed in this emergency. *Agamemnon* pursues this advice, and *Nestor* farther prevails upon him to send ambassadors to *Achilles*, in order to move him to a reconciliation. *Ulysses* and *Ajax* are made choice of, who are accompanied by old *Phœnix*. They make, each of them, very moving and pressing speeches, but are rejected with roughness by *Achilles*, who notwithstanding retains *Phœnix* in his tent. The ambassadors return unsuccessfully to the camp, and the troops betake themselves to sleep.

This book, and the next following, take up the space of one night, which is the twenty-seventh from the beginning of the poem. The scene lies on the sea-shore, the station of the Grecian ships.

THUS joyful Troy maintain'd the watch of night;
While fear, pale comrade of inglorious flight,
And heav'n-bred horror, on the Grecian part,
Sate on each face, and sadden'd ev'ry heart.

As from its cloudy dungeon issuing forth,
 A double tempest of the west and north
 Swells o'er the sea, from Thracia's frozen shore,
 Heaps waves on waves, and bids th'Ægean rore ;

5

We have here a new scene of action opened ; the poet has hitherto given us an account of what happened by day only : the two following books relate the adventures of the night.

It may be thought that Homer has crowded a great many actions into a very short time. In the ninth book a council is convened, an embassy sent, a considerable time passes in the speeches and replies of the ambassadors and Achilles ; in the tenth book a second council is called ; after this a debate is held, Dolon is intercepted, Diomed and Ulysses enter into the enemy's camp, kill Rhesus, and bring away his horses : and all this is done in the narrow compass of one night.

It must therefore be remembered that the ninth book takes up the first part of the night only ; that after the first council was dissolved, there passed some time before the second was summoned, as appears by the leaders being awakened by Menelaus. So that it was almost morning before Diomed and Ulysses set out upon their design, which is very evident from the words of Ulysses, book 10. v. 251.

Ἀλλ' ἵομεν· μάλα γὰρ νύξ ἀνέται, εἰγύβι δ' ἡώς.

So that although a great many incidents are introduced, yet every thing might easily have been performed in the allotted time.

v. 7. *From Thracia's shore.*] Homer has been supposed by Eratosthenes and others, to have been guilty of an error, in saying that Zephyrus, or the west wind, blows from Thrace, whereas in truth it blows toward it. But the poet speaks so, either because it is fabled to be the rendezvous of all the winds ; or with respect to

This way and that, the boiling deeps are tost;
 Such various passions urg'd the troubled host. 10
 Great Agamemnon griev'd above the rest;
 Superior sorrows swell'd his royal breast;
 Himself his orders to the heralds bears,
 To bid to council all the Grecian peers,
 But bid in whispers : these surround their chief, 15
 In solemn sadness, and majestic grief.
 The king amidst the mournful circle rose;
 Down his wan cheek a briny torrent flows:
 So silent fountains, form a rock's tall head,
 In fable streams soft-trickling waters shed. 20
 With more than vulgar grief he stood oppress'd;
 Words, mixt with sighs, thus bursting from his breast.
 Ye sons of Greece ! partake your leader's care,
 Fellows in arms, and princes of the war !

the particular situation of Troy and the Ægean sea. Either of these replies are sufficient to solve that objection.

The particular parts of this comparison agree admirably with the design of Homer, to express the distraction of the Greeks : the two winds representing the different opinions of the armies, one part of which were inclined to return, the other to stay. Eustathius.

v. 15. *But bid in whispers.*] The reason why Agamemnon commands his heralds to summon the leaders in silence, is for fear the enemy should discover their consternation, by reason of their nearness, or perceive what their designs were in this extremity. Eustathius.

v. 23. *Agamemnon's speech.*] The critics are divided in their opinion, whether this speech, which is word for word the same with that he makes in *lib. 2.* be on-

Of partial Jove too justly we complain,

25

And heav'nly oracles believ'd in vain;

ly a feint to try the army as it is there, or the real sentiments of the general. Dionysius of Halicarnassus explains it as the former, with whom madam Dacier concurs; she thinks they must be both counterfeit, because they are both the same, and believes Homer would have varied them, had the design been different. She takes no notice that Eustathius is of the contrary opinion; as is also monsieur de la Motte, who argues as if he had read him. "Agamemnon (says he) in the Iliad, thought himself assured of victory from the dream which Jupiter had sent to him, and in that confidence was desirous to bring the Greeks to a battle; but in the ninth book his circumstances are changed, he is in the utmost distress and despair upon his defeat, and therefore his proposal to raise the siege is in all probability sincere. If Homer had intended we should think otherwise, he would have told us so, as he did on the former occasion: and some of the officers would have suspected a feint, the rather because they had been imposed upon by the same speech before. But none of them suspect him at all. Diomed thinks him so much in earnest as to reproach his cowardice, Nestor applauds Diomed's liberty, and Agamemnon makes not the least defence for himself."

Dacier answers, that Homer had no occasion to tell us this was counterfeit, because the officers could not but remember it to have been so before; and as for the answers of Diomed and Nestor, they only carry on the same feint, as Dionysius has proved, whose reasons may be seen in the following note.

I do not pretend to decide upon this point; but which way soever it be, I think Agamemnon's design was equally answered by repeating the same speech: so that the repetition at least is not to be blamed in Homer. What obliged Agamemnon to that feint, in the

A safe return was promis'd to our toils,
With conquest honour'd, and enrich'd with spoils.
Now shameful flight alone can save the host ;
Our wealth, our people, and our glory lost. 30
So Jove decrees, Almighty Lord of all !
Jove, at whose nod whole empires rise or fall,
Who shakes the feeble props of human trust,
And tow'rs and armies humbles to the dust.
Haste then, for ever quit these fatal fields, 35
Haste to the joys our native country yields ;
Spread all your canvas, all your oars employ,
Nor hope the fall of heav'n-defended Troy.

He said ; deep silence held the Grecian band,
Silent, unmov'd, in dire dismay they stand, 40
A pensive scene ! 'till Tydeus' warlike son
Roll'd on the king his eyes, and thus begun.

second book, was the hatred he had incurred in the army by being the cause of Achilles's departure ; this made it but a necessary precaution in him to try, before he came to a battle, whether the Greeks were disposed to it : and it was equally necessary, in case the event should prove unsuccessful, to free himself from the odium of being the occasion of it. Therefore when they were now actually defeated, to repeat the same words, was the readiest way to put them in mind that he had proposed the same advice to them before the battle ; and to make it appear unjust that their ill fortune should be charged upon him. See the 5th and 8th notes on the second Iliad.

When kings advise us to renounce our fame,
First let him speak, who first has suffer'd shame.

v. 43. *The speech of Diomed.*] I shall here translate the criticism of Dionysius on this passage. He asks, "What can be the drift of Diomed, when he insults Agamemnon in his griefs and distresses! For what Diomed here says, seems not only very ill-timed, but inconsistent with his own opinion, and with the respect he had shewn in the beginning of this very speech.

*If I upbraid thee, prince, thy wrath with-hold,
The laws of council bid my tongue be bold.*

"This is the introduction of a man in temper, who is willing to soften and excuse the liberty of what is to follow, and what necessity only obliges him to utter. But he subjoins a resentment of the reproach the king had formerly thrown upon him, and tells him that Jupiter had given him power and dominion without courage and virtue. These are things which agree but ill together, that Diomed should upbraid Agamemnon in his adversity, with past injuries, after he had endured his reproaches with so much moderation, and had reprov'd Sthenelus so warmly for the contrary practice in the fourth book. If any one answer, that Diomed was warranted in this freedom by the bravery of his warlike behaviour since that reproach, he supposes this hero very ignorant how to demean himself in prosperity. The truth is, this whole accusation of Diomed's is only a feint to serve the designs of Agamemnon. For being desirous to persuade the Greeks against their departure, he effects that design by this counterfeited anger, and licence of speech: and seeming to resent, that Agamemnon should be capable of imagining the army would return to Greece, he artificially makes use of these reproaches

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If I oppose thee, prince, thy wrath with-hold, 45

The laws of council bid my tongue be bold.

Thou first, and thou alone, in fields of fight,

Durst brand my courage, and defame my might :

Nor from a friend th' unkind reproach appear'd,

The Greeks stood witness, all our army heard, 50

The Gods, O chief! from whom our honours spring,

The Gods have made thee but by halves a king ;

They gave thee sceptres, and a wide command,

They gave dominion o'er the seas and land,

The noblest pow'r that might the world controul 55

They gave thee not——a brave and virtuous soul.

Is this a gen'ral's voice, that would suggest

Fears like his own to ev'ry Grecian breast ?

Confiding in our want of worth, he stands,

And if we fly, 'tis what our king commands. 60

“ to cover his argument. This is farther confirmed by
 “ what follows, when he bids Agamemnon return, if
 “ he pleases, and affirms that the Grecians will stay
 “ without him. Nay, he carries the matter so far, as
 “ to boast, that if all the rest should depart, himself and
 “ Sthenelus alone would continue the war, which would
 “ be extreamly childish and absurd in any other view
 “ than this.”

v. 53 *They gave thee sceptres, etc.*] This is the
 language of a brave man, to affirm and say boldly, that
 courage is above sceptres and crowns. Sceptres and
 crowns were indeed in former times not hereditary, but
 the recompence of valour. With what art and haughti-
 ness Diomed sets himself inderecely above Agamemnon !
 Eustathius.

Go thou inglorious ! from the embattel'd plain ;
 Ships thou hast store, and nearest to the main,
 A nobler care the Grecians shall employ,
 To combat, conquer, and extirpate Troy.
 Here Greece shall stay ; or if all Greece retire, 65
 Myself will stay, 'till Troy or I expire ;
 Myself, and Sthenelus, will fight for fame ;
 God bade us fight, and 'twas with God we came.

He ceas'd ; the Greeks loud acclamations raise,
 And voice to voice resounds Tydides' praise. 70
 Wise Nestor then his rev'rend figure rear'd ;
 He spoke : the host in still attention heard.

O truly great ! in whom the Gods have join'd
 Such strength of body with such force of mind ;

v. 62. *And nearest to the main.*] There is a secret stroke of satire in these words ; Diomed tells the king that his squadron lies next the sea, insinuating that they were the most distant from the battle, and readiest for flight. Eustathius.

v. 68. *God bade us fight, and 'twas with God we came.*] This is literal from the Greek, and therein may be seen the style of holy scripture, where it is said that they *come with God*, or that they are not come *without God*, meaning that they did not come without his order : *Numquid sine Domino ascendi in terram istam ?* says Rabshekah to Hezekiah, in Isaiah 36. v. 8. This passage seems to me very beautiful. Homer adds it to shew that the valour of Diomed, which puts him upon remaining alone with Sthenelus, when all the Greeks were gone, is not a rash and mad boldness, but a reasonable one, and founded on the promises of God himself, who cannot lie. Dacier.

v. 73. *The speech of Nestor.*] Dionysius gives us the

In conduct, as in courage, you excel,

75

Still first to act what you advise so well

design of this speech in the place above cited. "Nestor
(says he) "seconds the oration of Diomed: We shall
"perceive the artifice of his discourse, if we reflect to
"how little purpose it would be without this design.
"He praises Diomed for what he has said, but does it
"not without declaring, that he had not spoken fully
"to the purpose, but fallen short in some points, which
"he ascribes to his youth, and promises to supply them.
"Then after a long preamble, when he has turned him-
"self several ways, as if he was sporting in a new and
"uncommon vein of oratory, he concludes by ordering
"the watch to their stations, and advising Agamemnon
"to invite the elders of the army to a supper, there,
"out of many counsels, to chuse the best. All this at
"first sight appears absurd; but we must know that
"Nestor too speaks in figure. Diomed seems to quarrel
"with Agamemnon purely to gratify him; but Nestor
"praises his liberty of speech, as it were to vindicate a
"real quarrel with the king. The end of all this is
"only to move Agamemnon to supplicate Achilles;
"and to that end he so much commends the young
"man's freedom. In proposing to call a council only
"of the eldest, he consults the dignity of Agamem-
"non, that he might not be exposed to make this con-
"descension before the younger officers. And he con-
"cludes by an artful inference of the absolute necessity
"of applying to Achilles from the present posture of
"their affairs.

*See what a blaze from hostile tents aspires,
How near our fleets approach the Trojan fires!*

"This is all Nestor says at this time before the gener-
"al assembly of the Greeks; but in his next speech when
"the elders only are present, he explains the whole

Those wholesome counsels which thy wisdom moves,
 Applauding Greece with common voice approves.
 Kings thou canst blame ; a bold, but prudent youth ;
 And blame ev'n kings with praise, because with truth. 80
 And yet those years that since thy birth have run,
 Would hardly style thee Nestor's youngest son.
 Then let me add what yet remains behind,
 A thought unfinish'd in that gen'rous mind ;
 Age bids me speak ; nor shall th' advice I bring 85
 Distaste the people, or offend the king :

Curs'd is the man, and void of law and right,
 Unworthy property, unworthy light,

“ matter at large, and openly declares that they must
 “ have recourse to Achilles.” Dion. Hal. *περί ἐχθρο-
 ματισμένων*, p. 2.

Plutarch, de aud. Poetis, takes notice of this piece of
 decorum in Nestor, who, when he intended to move for
 a mediation with Achilles, chose not to do it in public,
 but proposed a private meeting of the chiefs to that end.
 If what these two great authors have said, be considered,
 there will be no room for the trivial objection some
 moderns have made to this proposal of Nestor's, as if
 in the present distress he did no more than impertinent-
 ly advise them to go to supper.

v. 73. *O truly great !*] Nestor could do no less than
 commend Diomed's valour ; he had lately been a witness
 of it when he was preserved from falling into the ene-
 my's hands until he was rescued by Diomed. Eusta-
 thius.

v. 87. *Curs'd is the man.*] Nestor, says the same au-
 thor, very artfully brings in these words as a general
 maxim, in order to dispose Agamemnon to a reconcilia-
 tion with Achilles : he delivers it in general terms, and

Unfit for public rule, or private care ;
 That wretch, that monster, who delights in war : 90
 Whose lust is murder and whose horrid joy,
 To tear his country, and his kind destroy !
 This night, refresh and fortify thy train ;
 Between the trench and wall let guards remain :

leaves the king to make the application. This passage is translated with liberty, for the original comprizes a great deal in a very few words, ἀφρὲν τωρ, ἀθέμιτος, ἀνέσιος. It will be proper to give a particular explication of each of these : Ἀφρὲν τωρ, says Eustathius, signifies one who is a vagabond or foreigner. The Athenians kept a register, in which all that were born were inrolled, whence it easily appeared who were citizens, or not ; ἀφρὲν τωρ therefore signifies one who is deprived of the privilege of a citizen. Ἀθέμιτος is one who had forfeited all title to be protected by the laws of his country. Ἀνέσιος, one that has no habitation, or rather, one that was not permitted to partake of any family sacrifice. For Ἑστία is a family goddess ; and Jupiter sometimes is called Ζεὺς ἑστιᾶχος.

There is a sort of gradation in these words. Ἀθέμιτος signifies a man that has lost the privileges of his country ; ἀφρὲν τωρ those of his own tribe, and ἀνέσιος those of his own family.

v. 94. *Between the trench and wall.*] It is almost impossible to make such particularities as these appear with any tolerable elegance in poetry : and as they cannot be raised, so neither must they be omitted. This particular space here mentioned between the trench and wall, is what we must carry in our mind through this and the following book : otherwise we shall be at a loss to know the exact scene of the actions and counsels that follow.

Be that the duty of the young and bold ; 95

But thou, O king, to council call the old :

Great is thy sway, and weighty are thy cares ;

Thy high commands must spirit all our wars.

With Thracian wines recruit thy honour'd guests,

For happy counsels flow from sober feasts. 100

Wise, weighty counsels aid a state distressed,

And such a monarch as can chuse the best.

See ! what a blaze from hostile tents aspires,

How near our fleet approach the Trojan fires !

Who can, unmov'd, behold the dreadful light, 105

What eye beholds 'em, and can close to-night ?

This dreadful interval determines all ;

To-morrow Troy must flame, or Greece must fall.

Thus spoke the hoary sage : the rest obey ;

Swift thro' the gates the guards direct their way. 110

His son was first to pass the lofty mound,

The gen'rous Thrasymed, in arms renown'd :

Next him, Ascalaphus, Ialmen, stood,

The double offspring of the warrior-God.

Deipyrus, Aphareus, Merion join, 115

And Lycomed, of Creon's noble line.

Sev'n were the leaders of the nightly bands,

And each bold chief a hundred spears commands.

The fires they light, to short repasts they fall,

Some line the trench, and others man the wall. 120

v. 119. *The fires they light.*] They lighted up these fires that they might not seem to be under any consternation,

The king of men, on public counsels bent,
 Conven'd the princes in his ample tent;
 Each seiz'd a portion of the kingly feast,
 But staid his hand when thirst and hunger ceas'd.
 Then Nestor spoke, for wisdom long approv'd, 125
 And slowly rising, thus the council mov'd.

Monarch of nations ! whose superior sway
 Assembled states, and lords of earth obey,
 The laws and scepters to thy hand are giv'n,
 And millions own the care of thee and heav'n. 130
 O king ! the counsels of my age attend ;
 With thee my cares begin, in thee must end ;
 Thee, prince ! it fits alike to speak and hear,
 Pronounce with judgment, with regard give ear,
 To see no wholesome motion be withstood, 135
 And ratify the best for public good.
 Nor tho' a meaner give advice, repine,
 But follow it, and make the wisdom thine.

nation, but to be upon their guard against any alarm.
 Eustathius.

v. 124. *When thirst and hunger ceas'd.*] The conduct of Homer in this place is very remarkable ; he does not fall into a long description of the entertainment, but complies with the exigence of affairs, and passes on to the consultation. Eustathius.

v. 138. *And make the wisdom thine.*] Eustathius thought that Homer said this, because in council, as in the army, all is attributed to the princes, and the whole honour ascribed to them : but this is by no means Homer's thought. What he here says, is a maxim drawn from the profoundest philosophy That which often

Hear then a thought, not now conceiv'd in haste,
 At once my present judgment, and my past; 140
 When from Pelides' tent you forc'd the maid,
 I first oppos'd, and faithful, durst dissuade;
 But bold of soul, when headlong fury fir'd,
 You wrong'd the man, by men and Gods admir'd:
 Now seek some means his fatal wrath to end, 145
 With pray'rs to move him, or with gifts to bend.

To whom the king. With justice hast thou shown
 A prince's faults, and I with reason own.
 That happy man whom Jove still honours most,
 Is more than armies, and himself an host. 150
 Blest in his love, this wond'rous hero stands;
 Heav'n fights his war, and humbles all our bands.

does men the most harm, is envy, and the shame of yielding to advice, which proceeds from others. There is more greatness and capacity in following good advice, than in proposing it; by executing it, we render it our own, and we ravish even the property of it from its author; and Eustathius seems to incline to this thought, when he afterwards says, Homer makes him that follows good advice, equal to him that gives it; but he has not fully expressed himself. Dacier.

v. 140. *At once my present judgment, and my past.*] Nestor here, by the word *πάλαι*, means the advice he gave at the time of the quarrel in the first book: he says, as it was his opinion then, that Agamemnon ought not to disgrace Achilles, so after the maturest deliberation, he finds no reason to alter it. Nestor here launches out into the praises of Achilles, which is a secret argument to induce Agamemnon to regain his friendship, by shewing the importance of it. Eustathius.

v. 151. *This wond'rous hero.*] It is remarkable that

Fain wou'd my heart, which err'd thro' frantic rage,
The wrathful chief and angry Gods assuage.

If gifts immense his mighty soul can bow, 155
Hear, all ye Greeks, and witness what I vow.

Ten weighty talents of the purest gold,
And twice ten vases of refulgent mold ;

Agamemnon here never uses the name of Achilles : though he is resolved to court his friendship, yet he cannot bear the mention of his name. The impression which the dis-sension made, is not yet worn off, though he expatiates in commendation of his valour. Eustathius.

v. 155. *If gifts immense his mighty soul can bow.*] The poet, says Eustathius, makes a wise choice of the gifts that are to be proffered to Achilles. Had he been ambitious of wealth, there are golden tripods, and ten talents of gold to bribe his resentment. If he had been addicted to the fair sex, there was a king's daughter, and seven fair captives to win his favour. Or if he had been ambitious of greatness, there were seven wealthy cities, and a kingly power to court him to a reconciliation : but he takes this way to shew us that his anger was stronger than all his other passions. It is farther observable, that Agamemnon promises these presents at three different times ; first, at this instant ; secondly, on the taking of Troy ; and lastly, after their return to Greece. This division in some degree multiplies them. Dacier.

v. 157. *Ten weighty talents.*] The ancient critics have blamed one of the verses in the enumeration of these presents, as not sufficiently flowing and harmonious, the pause is ill placed, and one word does not fall easily into the other. This will appear very plain, if we compare it with a more numerous verse.

Ἄχαιον ἐπὶ ῥηγμῖνος αἶλος πολιοῖο θέεσκον.

Ἀἰθωνας δὲ λίβητας εἴκοσι, δῶδεκα δ' ἵππους.

Sev'n sacred tripods, whose unfully'd frame

Yet knows no office, nor has felt the flame: 160

Twelve steeds unmatch'd in fleetness and in force,

And still victorious in the dusty course:

The ear immediately perceives the music of the former line; every syllable glides smoothly away, without offending the ear with any such roughness, as is found in the second. The first runs as swiftly as the courser it describes; but the latter is a broken, interrupted, uneven verse. But it is certainly pardonable in this place, where the musick of poetry is not necessary; the mind is entirely taken up in learning what presents Agamemnon intended to make Achilles: and is not at leisure to regard the ornaments of versification; and even those pauses are not without their beauties, as they would of necessity cause a stop in the delivery, and so give time for each particular to sink into the mind of Achilles. Eustathius.

v. 159. *Seven sacred tripods.*] There were two kinds of tripods; in the one they used to boil water, the other was entirely for shew; to mix wine and water in, says Athenæus: the first were called λέβηταις, or cauldrons, for common use, and made to bear the fire; the other were ἀπυγοί, and made chiefly for ornament. It may be asked why this could be a proper present for Achilles, who was a martial man, and regarded nothing but arms? It may be answered, that these presents very well suited to the person to whom they were sent, as tripods in ancient days were the usual prizes in games, and they were given by Achilles himself in those which he exhibited in honour of Patroclus: the same may be said of the female captives, which were also among the prizes in the games of Patroclus. Eustathius.

v. 161. *Twelve steeds unmatch'd.*] From hence it is evident that games used to be celebrated in the Grecian army during the time of war; perhaps in honour of the

(Rich were the man whose ample stores exceed
 The prizes purchas'd by their winged speed :)
 Sev'n lovely captives of the Lesbian line, 165
 Skill'd in each art, unmatch'd in form divine, ,
 The fame I chose for more than vulgar charms,
 When Lesbos sunk beneath the hero's arms.
 All these, to buy his friendship, shall be paid,
 And join'd with these the long-contested maid ; 170
 With all her charms, Briseis I resign,
 And solemn swear those charms were never mine ;
 Untouch'd she stay'd, uninjur'd she removes,
 Pure from my arms, and guiltless of my loves.
 These instant shall be his ; and if the pow'rs 175
 Give to our arms proud Ilion's hostile tow'rs,
 Then shall he store (when Greece the spoil divides)
 With gold and brass his loaded navy's sides.
 Besides full twenty nymphs of Trojan race,
 With copious love shall crown his warm embrace ; 180
 Such as himself will chuse ; who yield to none,
 Or yield to Helen's heav'nly charms alone.
 Yet hear me farther : when our wars are o'er,
 If safe we land on Argos' fruitful shore,
 There shall he live, my son, our honours share, 185
 And with Orestes' self divide my care.

deceased heroes. For had Agamemnon given Achilles
 horses that had been victorious before the beginning of
 the Trojan war, they would by this time have been too
 old to be of any value. Eustathius.

Yet more——three daughters in my court are bred,
 And each well worthy of a royal bed;
 Laodice and Iphigenia fair,
 And bright Chrysothemis with golden hair; 190
 Her let him chuse, whom most his eyes approve,
 I ask no presents, no reward for love:
 Myself will give the dow'r; so vast a store,
 As never father gave a child before.

v. 189. *Laodice and Iphigenia*, etc.] These are the names of Agamemnon's daughters, among which we do not find Electra. But some affirm, says Eustathius, that Laodice and Electra are the same (as Iphianassa is the same with Iphigenia) and she was called so either by way of sur-name, or by reason of her complexion, which was, ἡλεκτρεῶδες, *flava*; or by way of derision ἡλεκτρα *quasi* ἄλεκτρον, because she was an old maid, as appears from Euripides, who says that she remained long a virgin.

Παρθένε, μακρὸν δὴ μῆκος ἡλέκτρα χρόνῳ.

And in Sophocles, she says of herself, Ἀνύμφευτος αἰὲν οἰχυνῶ, *I wander a disconsolate unmarried virgin*, which shews that it was ever looked upon as a disgrace to continue long so.

v. 192. *I ask no presents,——Myself will give the dow'r.*] For in Greece the bridegroom, before he married, was obliged to make two presents, one to his betrothed wife, and the other to his father-in-law. This custom is very ancient; it was practised by the Hebrews in the time of the patriarchs. Abraham's servant gave necklaces and ear-rings to Rebecca, whom he demanded for Isaac, Gen. xxiv. 22. Shechem son of Hamor says to Jacob and his sons, whose sister he was desirous to espouse, “Ask me never so much dowry and gifts, Gen. xxxiv. 12. For the dowry was for the daughter.

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 Sev'n ample cities shall confess his sway, 195
 Him Enope, and Pheræ him obey;
 Cardamyle with ample turrets crown'd,
 And sacred Pedasus for vines renown'd;
 Æpea fair, the pastures Hira yields,
 And rich Antheia with her flow'ry fields: 200
 The whole extent to Pylos' sandy plain,
 Along the verdant margin of the main.
 There heifers graze, and lab'ring oxen toil;
 Bold are the men, and gen'rous is the soil;
 There shall he reign with pow'r and justice crown'd, 205
 And rule the tributary realms around.
 All this I give, his vengeance to controul,
 And sure all this may move his mighty soul.
 Pluto, the grizly God, who never spares,
 Who feels no mercy, and who hears no pray'rs, 210

This present served for her dowry, and the other presents were for the father. In the first book of Samuel xviii. 25. Saul makes them say to David, who by reason of his poverty said he could not be son-in-law to the king: "The king desireth not any dowry." And in the last two passages, we see the presents were commonly regulated by the father of the bride. There is no mention in Homer of any present made to the father, but only of that which was given to the married daughter, which was called *ἐνδᾶ*. The dowry which the father gave to his daughter was called *μέλεια* wherefore Agamemnon says here, *ἐπιμέλεια δάσω*. Dacier.

v. 209. *Pluto, the grizly God, who never spares.*] The meaning of this may be gathered from Æschylus, cited here by Eustathius.

Lives dark and dreadful in deep hell's abodes;
 And mortals hate him, as the worst of Gods.
 Great tho' he be, it fits him to obey;
 Since more than his my years, and more my sway.

The monarch thus: the rev'rend Nestor then: 215
 Great Agamemnon! glorious king of men!
 Such are thy offers as a prince may take,
 And such as fits a gen'rous king to make.
 Let chosen delegates this hour be sent,
 (Myself will name them) to Pelides' tent: 220
 Let Phoenix lead, rever'd for hoary age,
 Great Ajax next, and Ithacus the sage,

Μόνος θεῶν θάνατος ἔδῳρων ἐρεῖ,
 Ὃυδ' ἄν τι δύων ἐθ' ἐπισπένδων λάβοις,
 Ὃυδ' ἔτι βωμὸς, ἐδὲ παιωνίζεται.

“ Death is the only God who is not moved by offerings,
 “ whom you cannot conquer by sacrifices and oblations,
 “ and therefore he is the only God to whom no altar is
 “ erected, and no hymns are sung.”

v. 221. *Let Phoenix lead.*] How comes it to pass that Phoenix is in the Grecian camp, when undoubtedly he retired with his pupil Achilles? Eustathius says, the ancients conjectured that he came to the camp to see the first battle: and indeed nothing is more natural to imagine, than that Achilles would be impatient to know the event of the day, when he himself was absent from the fight: and as his revenge and glory were to be satisfied by the ill success of the Grecians, it is highly probable that he sent Phoenix to enquire after it. Eustathius farther observes, Phoenix was not an ambassador, but only the conductor of the embassy. This is evident from the words themselves, which are all along delivered in the dual number; and farther, from Achil-

Yet more to sanctify the word you send,
 Let Hodius and Eurybates attend
 Now pray to Jove to grant what Greece demands ; 225
 Pray, in deep silence, and with purest hands.

He said, and all approv'd. The heralds bring
 The cleansing water from the living spring.
 The youth with wine the sacred goblets crown'd,
 And large libations drench'd the sands around. 230
 The rite perform'd, the chiefs their thirst allay,
 Then from the royal tent they take their way ;
 Wise Nestor turns on each his careful eye,
 Forbids t'offend, instructs them to apply :

les's requiring Phœnix to stay with him when the other two departed.

v. 222. *Great Ajax next, and Ithacus the sage.*] The choice of the persons is made with a great deal of judgment. Achilles could not but reverence the venerable Phœnix his guardian and tutor. Ajax and Ulysses had been disgraced in the first book, line 187, as well as he, and were therefore proper persons to persuade him to forgive as they had forgiven ; besides, it was the greatest honour that could be done to Achilles, to send the most worthy personages in the army to him. Ulysses was inferior to none in eloquence but to Nestor. Ajax was second to none in valour but to Achilles.

Ajax might have an influence over him as a relation, by descent from Æacus, Ulysses as an orator : to these are joined Hodius and Eurybates, two heralds, which though it were not customary, yet was necessary in this place, both to certify Achilles that this embassy was the act of Agamemnon himself, and also to make these persons who had been witnesses before God and man of the wrong done to Achilles in respect of Briseis, witnesses also of the satisfaction given him. Eustathius.

Much he advis'd them all, Ulysses most, 235
 To deprecate the chief, and save the host.
 Thro' the still night they march, and hear the roar
 Of murm'ring billows on the sounding shore.
 To Neptune, ruler of the seas profound,
 Whose liquid arms the mighty globe surround, 240
 They pour forth vows, their embassy to bless,
 And calm the rage of stern Æacides.
 And now arriv'd, where, on the sandy bay
 The Myrmidonian tents and vessels lay;
 Amus'd at ease, the godlike man they found, 245
 Pleas'd with the solemn harp's harmonious sound.

v. 235. *Much he advis'd them all, Ulysses most.*] There is a great propriety in representing Nestor as so particularly applying himself on this occasion to Ulysses, Though he of all men had the least need of his instructions; yet it is highly natural for one wise man to talk most to another.

v. 246. *Pleas'd with the solemn harp's harmonious sound.*] "Homer (says Plutarch) to prove what an excellent use may be made of music, feigned Achilles to compose by this means the wrath he had conceived against Agamemnon. He sung to his harp the noble actions of the valiant, and the achievements of heroes and denigods, a subject worthy of Achilles. Homer moreover teaches us in this fiction the proper season for music, when a man is at leisure and unemployed in greater affairs. For Achilles so valorous as he was, had retired from action through his displeasure to Agamemnon. And nothing was better suited to the martial disposition of this hero, than these heroic songs, that prepared him for the deeds and toils he afterwards undertook, by the celebration

(The well-wrought harp from conquer'd Thebæ came,
Of polish'd silver was its costly frame ;)

With this he foothes his angry soul, and sings
Th' immortal deeds of heroes and of kings. 250

Patroclus only of the royal train,
Plac'd in his tent, attends the lofty strain
Full opposite he fate, and listen'd long,
In silence waiting 'till he ceas'd the song.
Unseen the Grecian embassy proceeds 255

To his high tent ; the great Ulysses leads.
Achilles starting, as the chiefs he spy'd,
Leap'd from his seat, and laid the harp aside.
With like surprize arose Menœtius' son :
Pelides grasp'd their hands, and thus begun. 260

Princes all hail ! whatever brought you here,
Or strong necessity, or urgent fear ;
Welcome, tho' Greeks ! for not as foes ye came ;
To me more dear than all that bear the name.

“ of the like in those who had gone before him. Such
“ was the ancient music, and to such purposes it was
“ applied.” Plut. of music. The same author relates
in the life of Alexander, that when the lyre of Paris
was offered to that prince, he made answer, “ He had
“ little value for it, but much desired that of Achilles,
“ on which he sung the actions of heroes in former
“ times.”

v. 261. *Princes all hail !*] This short speech is wonderfully proper to the occasion, and to the temper of the speaker. One is under a great expectation of what Achilles will say at the sight of these heroes, and I know nothing in nature that could satisfy it but the very thing he here accosts them with.

With that, the chiefs beneath his roof he led, 265
 And plac'd in seats with purple carpets spread.
 Then thus——Patroclus, crown a larger bowl,
 Mix purer wine, and open ev'ry soul.
 Of all the warriors yonder host can send,
 Thy friend most honours these, and these thy friend. 270
 He said; Patroclus o'er the blazing fire
 Heaps in a brazen vase three chimes intire :

v. 268. *Mix purer wine.*] The meaning of this word ζωροτερον is very dubious; some say it signifies warm wine, from ζέω, *ferveo*: according to Aristotle it is an adverb, and implies to mix wine *quickly*. And others think it signifies pure wine. In this last sense Herodotus uses it. Ἐπὶ ζωρότερον βέλωνται οἱ Σπαρτιάται πιεῖν, ἐπισκῦθισον λέγουσιν, ὡς ἀπὸ τῶν Σκυθῶν, οἱ φησιν, εἰς Σπάρτην ἀφικόμενοι πρέσβεις, ἐδίδαξαν τὸν Κληομένην ἀκρατοποτεῖν. Which in English is thus: “Spartans have an inclination to drink their wine pure and not diluted, they propose to drink after the manner of the Scythians; some of whom coming ambassadors to Sparta, taught Cleomenes to drink his wine unmixed.” I think this sense of the word most natural, and Achilles might give this particular order not to dilute the wine so much as usually, because the ambassadors, who were brave men, might be supposed to be much fatigued in the late battle, and to want a more than usual refreshment. Eustathius. See Plut. Symp. l. 4 c. 5.

v. 271 *Patroclus o'er the blazing fire, etc.*] The reader must not expect to find much beauty in such descriptions as these: they give us an exact account of the simplicity of that age, which for all we know might be a part of Homer's design; there being, no doubt, a considerable change of customs in Greece, from the time of the Trojan war to those wherein our author lived; and it seemed demanded of him to omit nothing that

The brazen vase Automedon sustains,

Which flesh of porket, sheep and goat contains :

that might give the Greeks an idea of the manners of their predecessors. But however that matter stood, it should, methinks, be a pleasure to a modern reader, to see how such mighty men, whose actions have survived their persons three thousand years, lived in the earliest ages of the world. The ambassadors found this hero, says Eustathius, without any attendants; he had no ushers or waiters to introduce them, no servile parasites about him: the latter ages degenerated into these pieces of state and pageantry.

The supper also is described with an equal simplicity: three princes are busied in preparing it, and they who made the greatest figure in the field of battle, thought it no disparagement to prepare their own repast. The objections some have made, that Homer's Gods and heroes do every thing for themselves, as if several of those offices were unworthy of them, proceeds from the corrupt idea of modern luxury and grandeur: whereas in truth it is rather a weakness and imperfection to stand in need of the assistance and ministry of others. But however it be, methinks those of the nicest taste might relish this entertainment of Homer's, when they consider these great men as soldiers in a camp, in whom the least appearance of luxury would have been a crime.

v. 271. *Patroclus o'er the blazing fire.*] Madam Dacier's general note on this passage deserves to be transcribed. "Homer, says she, is in the right not to avoid these descriptions, because nothing can properly be called vulgar which is drawn from the manner and usages of persons of the first dignity; and also because in his tongue even the terms of cookery are so noble, and of so agreeable a sound, and he likewise knows how to place them so well, as to extract a perfect harmony from them: so that he may be said to be as excellent a poet when he describes these small mat-

Achilles at the genial feast presides, 275
 The parts transfixes, and with skill divides.
 Meanwhile Patroclus sweats the fire to raise;
 The tent is bright'ned with the rising blaze:
 Then, when the languid flames at length subside,
 He strows a bed of glowing embers wide, 280
 Above the coals the smoking fragments turns,
 And sprinkles sacred salt from lifted turns;

" ters, as when he treats of the greatest subjects. It is
 " not so either with our manners, or our language.
 " Cookery is left to servants, and all its terms so low
 " and disagreeable, even in the found, that nothing can
 " be made of them, that has not some taint of their
 " meanness. This great disadvantage made me at first
 " think of abridging this preparation of the repast; but
 " when I had well considered it, I was resolved to pre-
 " serve and give Homer as he is, without retrenching
 " any thing from the simplicity of the heroic manners.
 " I do not write to enter the lists against Homer, I will
 " dispute nothing with him; my design is only to give
 " an idea of him, and to make him understood: the
 " reader will therefore forgive me if this description has
 " none of its original graces."

v. 272. *In a brazen vase.*] The word *κεῖνον* signifies
 the vessel, and not the meat itself, as Euphorion con-
 jectured, giving it as a reason that Homer makes no
 mention of boiled meat: but this does not hinder but
 that the meat might be parboiled in the vessel to make
 it roast the sooner. This, with some other notes on
 the particulars of this passage, belong to Eustathius, and
 madam Dacier ought not to have taken to herself the
 merit of his explanations.

v. 282. *And sprinkles sacred salt.*] Many reasons are
 given why salt is called sacred or divine, but the best is
 because it preserves things incorrupt, and keeps them

With bread the glitt'ring canisters they load,
Which round the board Menœtius' son bestow'd ;
Himself, oppos'd t' Ulysses full in sight, 285
Each portion parts, and orders ev'ry rite:
The first fat off'rings, to th'immortals due,
Amidst the greedy flames Patroclus threw ;
Then each, indulging in the social feast,
His thirst and hunger soberly repress. 290
That done, to Phœnix Ajax gave the sign ;
Not unperceiv'd ; Ulysses crown'd with wine

from dissolution. " So thunder (says Plutarch, *Sympos. l. 5. qu. 10.*) " is called divine, because bodies struck " with thunder will not putrify ; besides generation is " divine, because God is the principle of all things, and " salt is most operative in generation. Lycophron calls " it ἀγνίτην τὸν ἄλα : for this reason Venus was feign- " ed by the poets to spring from the sea."

v. 291. *To Phœnix Ajax gave the sign.*] Ajax, who was a rough soldier and no orator, is impatient to have the business over : he makes a sign to Phœnix to begin, but Ulysses prevents him. Perhaps Ulysses might flatter himself that his oratory would prevail upon Achilles, and so obtain the honour of making the reconciliation himself : or if he were repulsed, there yet remained a second and a third resource in Ajax and Phœnix, who might renew the attempt, and endeavour to shake his resolution : there would still be some hopes of success, as one of these was his guardian, the other his relation. One may farther add to these reasons of Eustathius, that it would have been improper for Phœnix to have spoken first, since he was not an ambassador : and therefore Ulysses was the fitter person, as being empowered by that function to make an offer of the presents, in the name of the king.

The foaming bowl, and infant thus began,
His speech addressing to the godlike man.

Health to Achilles! happy are thy guests! 295
Not those more honour'd whom Atrides feasts:
Tho' gen'rous plenty crown thy loaded boards,
That Agamemnon's regal tent affords,
But greater cares sit heavy on our souls,
Not eas'd by banquets or by flowing bowls. 300

v. 295. *Health to Achilles.*] There are no discourses in the Iliad better placed, better timed, or that give a greater idea of Homer's genius, than these of the ambassadors to Achilles. These speeches are not only necessarily demanded by the occasion, but disposed with art, and in such an order, as raises more and more the pleasure of the reader. Ulysses speaks the first, the character of whose discourse is a well-addressed eloquence; so the mind is agreeably engaged by the choice of his reasons and applications: Achilles replies with a magnanimous freedom, whereby the mind is elevated with the sentiments of the hero: Phœnix discourses in a manner touching and pathetic, whereby the heart is moved; and Ajax concludes with a generous disdain that leaves the soul of the reader inflamed. This order undoubtedly denotes a great poet, who knows how to command attention as he pleases, by the arrangement of his matter; and I believe it is not possible to propose a better model for the happy disposition of a subject. These words are monsieur de la Motte's, and no testimony can be more glorious to Homer than this, which comes from the mouth of an enemy.

v. 296. *Not these more honour'd whom Atrides feasts*] I must just mention Dacier's observation: with what cunning Ulysses here slides in the odious name of Agamemnon, as he praises Achilles, that the ear of this impetuous man might be familiarized to that name.

What scenes of slaughter in yon' fields appear !
 The dead we mourn, and for the living fear ;
 Greece on the brink of fate all doubtful stands,
 And owns no help but from thy saving hands :
 Troy and her aids for ready vengeance call ; 305
 Their threatening tents already shade our wall :
 Hear how with shouts their conquest they proclaim,
 And point at ev'ry ship their vengeful flame !
 For them the Father of the Gods declares,
 Theirs are his omens, and his thunder theirs. 310
 See, full of Jove, avenging Hector rise !
 See ! heav'n and earth the raging chief defies ;
 What fury in his breast, what lightning in his eyes !
 He waits but for the morn, to sink in flame
 The ships, the Greeks, and all the Grecian name. 315
 Heav'ns ! how my country's woes distract my mind,
 Left fate accomplish all his rage design'd.
 And must we, Gods ! our heads inglorious lay
 In Trojan dust, and this the fatal day ?

v. 314. *He waits but for the morn, to sink in flames the ships, the Greeks, etc.*] There is a circumstance in the original which I have omitted, for fear of being too particular in an oration of this warmth and importance ; but as it preserves a piece of antiquity, I must not forget it here. He says that Hector will not only fire the fleet, but bear off the *statues of the Gods*, which were carved on the prows of the vessels. These were hung up in the temples, as monuments of victory, according to the custom of those times.

Return, Achilles ! oh return, tho' late, 320
To save thy Greeks, and stop the course of fate ;
If in that heart, or grief, or courage lies,
Rise to redeem ; ah yet, to conquer, rise !
The day may come, when all our warriors slain,
That heart shall melt, that courage rise in vain. 325
Regard in time, O prince divinely brave !
Those wholesome counsels which thy father gave.
When Peleus in his aged arms embrac'd
His parting son, these accents were his last.
My child ! with strength, with glory and success, 330
Thy arms may Juno and Minerva bless !
Trust that to heav'n : but thou, thy cares engage
To calm thy passions, and subdue thy rage :
From gentler manners let thy glory grow,
And shun contention, the sure source of woe ; 335
That young and old may in thy praise combine,
The virtues of humanity be thine——
This, now despis'd advice, thy father gave ;
Ah ! check thy anger, and be truly brave.
If thou wilt yield to great Atrides' pray'rs, 340
Gifts worthy thee his royal hand prepares :
If not——but hear me, while I number o'er
The proffer'd presents, an exhaustless store.

v. 342. *But hear me, while I number o'er the proffer'd presents.*] Monsieur de la Motte finds fault with Homer for making Ulysses in this place repeat all the offers of Agamemnon to Achilles. Not to answer that it was but necessary to make known to Achilles all the pro-

Book IX. H O M E R's I L I A D. 187
 Ten weighty talents of the purest gold,
 And twice ten vases of refulgent mold ; 345
 Sev'n sacred tripods, whose unfully'd frame
 Yet knows no office, nor has felt the flame :
 Twelve steeds unmatch'd in fleetness and in force,
 And still victorious in the dusty course :
 (Rich were the man whose ample stores exceed 350
 The prizes purchas'd by their winged speed)
 Sev'n lovely captives of the Lesbian line,
 Skill'd in each art, unmatch'd in form divine,
 The same he chose for more than vulgar charms,
 When Lesbos sunk beneath thy conqu'ring arms. 355
 All these, to buy thy friendship, shall be paid,
 And join'd with these the long-contested maid ;
 With all her charms, Briseis he'll resign,
 And solemn swear those charms were only thine ;
 Untouch'd she stay'd, uninjur'd she removes, 360
 Pure from his arms, and guiltless of his loves.
 These instant shall be thine ; and if the pow'rs
 Give to our arms proud Ilion's hostile tow'rs,
 Then shalt thou store (when Greece the spoil divides)
 With gold and brass thy loaded navy's sides. 365

posals, or that this distinct enumeration served the more
 to move him, I think one may appeal to any person of
 common taste, whether the solemn recital of these cir-
 cumstances does not please him more than the simple nar-
 ration could have done, which monf. de la Motte would
 have put in its stead. *Ulysses made all the offers Aga-
 memnon had commissioned him.*

Besides full twenty nymphs of Trojan race,
With copious love shall crown thy warm embrace ;
Such as thyself shall chuse ; who yield to none,
Or yield to Helen's heav'nly charms alone.
Yet hear me farther : when our wars are o'er, 370
If safe we land on Argos' fruitful shore,
There shalt thou live his son, his honours share,
And with Orestes' self divide his care.
Yet more——three daughters in his court are bred,
And each well worthy of a royal bed ; 375
Laodice and Iphigenia fair,
And bright Chrysothemis with golden hair ;
Her shalt thou wed whom most thy eyes approve ;
He asks no presents, no reward for love :
Himself will give the dow'r ; so vast a store, 380
As never father gave a child before.
Sev'n ample cities shall confess thy sway,
Thee Enope, and Pheræ thee obey,
Cardamyle with ample turrets crown'd,
And sacred Pedasus, for vines renown'd : 385
Æpea fair, the pastures Hira yields,
And rich Antheia with her flow'ry fields :
The whole extent to Pylos' sand plain
Along the verdant margin of the main.
There heifers graze, and lab'ring oxen toil ; 390
Bold are the men, and gen'rous is the soil.
There shalt thou reign with pow'r and justice crown'd,
And rule the tributary realms around.

Book IX. H O M E R's I L I A D. 189
 Such are the proffers which this day we bring,
 Such the repentance of a suppliant king. 395
 But if all this relentless thou disdain,
 If honour, and if int'rest plead in vain ;
 Yet some redress to suppliant Greece afford,
 And be, amongst her guardian Gods, ador'd.
 If no regard thy suff'ring country claim, 400
 Hear thy own glory, and the voice of fame :
 For now that chief, whose unresisted ire
 Made nations tremble, and whole hosts retire,
 Proud Hector, now, th' unequal fight demands,
 And only triumphs to deserve thy hands. 405
 Then thus the goddess-born. Ulysses, hear
 A faithful speech, that knows nor art, nor fear ;
 What in my secret soul is understood, 410
 My tongue shall utter, and my deeds make good.
 Let Greece then know, my purpose I retain,
 Nor with new treaties vex my peace in vain.

v. 406. *Achilles's speech.*] Nothing is more remarkable than the conduct of Homer in this speech of Achilles. He begins with some degree of coolness, as in respect to the ambassadors, whose persons he esteemed, yet even there his temper just shews itself in the insinuation that Ulysses had dealt artfully with him, which in two periods rises into an open detestation of all artifice. He then falls into a fullen declaration of his resolves, and a more sedate representation of his past services ; but warms as he goes on, and every minute he but names his wrongs, flies out into extravagance. His rage, awakened by that injury, is like a fire blown by a wind that sinks and rises by fits, but keeps continually burning, and blazes but the more for those intermissions.

Who dares think one thing and another tell,
My heart detests him as the gates of hell.

Then thus in short my fixt resolves attend,
Which nor Atrides, nor his Greeks can bend; 415
Long toils, long perils in their cause I bore,
But now th' unfruitful glories charm no more.
Fight or not fight, a like reward we claim,
The wretch and hero find their prize the same;
Alike regretted in the dust he lies, 420
Who yields ignobly, or who bravely dies.
Of all my dangers, all my glorious pains,
A life of labours, lo! what fruit remains?
As the bold bird her helpless young attends,
From danger guards them, and from want defends; 425
In search of prey she wings the spacious air,
And with th' untasted food supplies her care:
For thankless Greece such hardships have I brav'd,
Her wives, her infants by my labours sav'd;

v. 424. *As the bold bird, etc.*] This simile (says la Motte) must be allowed to be just, but was not fit to be spoken in a passion. One may answer, that the tenderness of the comparison renders it no way the less proper to a man in a passion; it being natural enough, the more one is disgusted at present, the more to recollect the kindness we have formerly shewn to those who are ungrateful. Eustathius observes, that so soft as the simile seems, it has nevertheless its *fiercé*; for Achilles herein expresses his contempt for the Greeks, as a weak defenceless people, who must have perished, if he had not preserved them. And indeed, if we consider what is said in the preceding note, it will appear that the passion of Achilles ought not as yet to be at the height.

Book IX. H O M E R's I L I A D. 191
 Long sleepless nights in heavy arms I stood, 430
 And sweat laborious days in dust and blood.
 I sack'd twelve ample cities on the main,
 And twelve lay smoking on the Trojan plain:
 Then at Atrides' haughty feet were laid
 The wealth I gather'd, and the spoils I made. 435
 Your mighty monarch these in peace possess;
 Some few my foldiers had, himself the rest.
 Some present too to ev'ry prince was paid;
 And ev'ry prince enjoys the gift he made;
 I only must refund, of all his train; 440
 See what pre-eminence our merits gain!
 My spoil alone his greedy soul delights;
 My spouse alone must bless his lustful nights:
 'The woman, let him (as he may) enjoy;
 But what's the quarrel then of Greece to Troy? 445
 What to these shores th' assembled nations draws,
 What calls for vengeance, but a woman's cause?

v. 432. *I sack'd twelve ample cities.*] Eustathius says, that the anger of Achilles not only throws him into tautology, but also into ambiguity: for, says he, these words may either signify that he destroyed twelve cities with his ships, or barely cities with twelve ships. But Eustathius in this place is like many other commentators, who can see a meaning in a sentence, that never entered into the thoughts of an author. It is not easy to conceive how Achilles could have expressed himself more clearly. There is no doubt but δώδεκα agrees with the same word that ἐνδεκα does, in the following line, which is certainly πόλεις; and there is a manifest enumeration of the places he had conquered by sea, and by land.

Are fair endowments and a beauteous face
Belov'd by none but those of Atreus' race?

The wife whom choice and passion both approve, 450

Sure ev'ry wife and worthy man will love.

Nor did my fair-one less distinction claim;

Slave as she was, my soul ador'd the dame.

Wrong'd in my love all proffers I disdain;

Deceiv'd for once, I trust not kings again. 455

v. 450. *The wife whom choice and passion both approve, sure ev'ry wife and worthy man will love.*] The argument of Achilles in this place is very a-propos with reference to the case of Agamemnon. If I translated it *verbatim*, I must say in plain English, *Every honest man loves his wife*. Thus Homer has made this rash, this fiery soldier governed by his passions, and in the rage of youth, bear testimony to his own respect for the ladies. But it seems Poltis king of Thrace was of another opinion, who would have parted with two wives, out of pure good-nature to two mere strangers; as I have met with the story somewhere in Plutarch. When the Greeks were raising forces against Troy, they sent ambassadors to this Poltis to desire his assistance. He inquired the cause of the war, and was told it was the injury Paris had done Menelaus in taking his wife from him. "If that be
"all, said the good king, let me accommodate the difference: indeed it is not just the Greek prince should
"lose a wife, and on the other side it is pity the Trojan
"should want one. Now I have two wives, and to
"prevent all this mischief, I'll send one of them to
"Menelaus, and the other to Paris." It is a shame this story is so little known, and that poor Poltis yet remains uncelebrated: I cannot but recommend him to the modern poets.

Your

Ye have my answer—what remains to do,
 Your king, Ulysses, may consult with you.
 What needs he the defence this arm can make?
 Has he not walls no human force can shake?
 Has he not fenc'd his guarded navy round, 460
 With piles, with ramparts, and a trench profound?
 And will not these, (the wonders he has done)
 Repel the rage of Priam's single son?
 There was a time ('twas when for Greece I fought)
 When Hector's prowess no such wonders wrought; 465
 He kept the verge of Troy, nor dar'd to wait
 Achilles' fury at the Scæan gate;
 He try'd it once, and scarce was sav'd by fate.

v. 457. *Your king, Ulysses, may consult with you.*]
 Achilles still remembers what Agamemnon said to him
 when they quarrelled, *Other brave warriors will be left
 behind to follow me in battle*, as we have seen in the first
 book. He answers here without either sparing Ajax or
 Ulysses; as much his friends as they are, they have their
 share in this stroke of raillery. Eustathius.

v. 459. *Has he not walls &c*] This is a bitter satire,
 (says Eustathius) against Agamemnon, as if his only deeds
 were the making of this wall, this ditch, these palisades,
 to defend himself against those whom he came to besiege:
 there was no need of these retrenchments, whilst Achil-
 les fought. But (as Dacier observes) this satire does not
 affect Agamemnon only, but Nestor too, who had advis-
 ed the making of these retrenchments, and who had said
 in the second book, *If there are a few who separate
 themselves from the rest of the army, let them stay and
 perish*, v. 346. Probably this had been reported to Achil-
 les, and that hero revenges himself here by mocking these
 retrenchments.

But now those ancient enmities are o'er;
 To-morrow we the fav'ring Gods implore, 470
 Then shall you see our parting vessels crown'd,
 And hear with oars the Hellespont resound.
 The third day hence shall Pthia greet our sails,
 If mighty Neptune send propitious gales;
 Pthia to her Achilles shall restore 475
 The wealth he left for this detested shore:
 Thither the spoils of this long war shall pass,
 The ruddy gold, the steel, and shining brass;
 My beauteous captives thither I'll convey,
 And all that rests of my unravish'd prey. 480
 One only valu'd gift your tyrant gave,
 And that resum'd; the fair Lyrnessian slave.

v. 473. *The third day hence shall Pthia, etc.*] Mont-
 fier de la Motte thinks the mention of these minute cir-
 cumstances not to agree with the passionate character of the
 speaker; that *he shall arrive at Pthia in three days, that*
he shall find there all the riches he left when he came
to the siege, and that he shall carry other treasures
home. Dacier answers, that we need only consider the
 present situation of Achilles, and his cause of complaint
 against Agamemnon, and we shall be satisfied here is no-
 thing but what is exactly agreeable to the occasion. To
 convince the ambassadors that he will return home, he
 instances the easiness of doing it in the space of three
 days. Agamemnon had injured him in the point of
 booty, he therefore declares he had sufficient treasures
 at home, and that he will carry off spoils enough, and
 women enough, to make amends for those that prince
 had ravished from him. Every one of these particulars
 marks his passion and resentment.

v. 481. *One only valu'd gift your tyrant gave.*] The

Then tell him ; loud, that all the Greeks may hear,
And learn to scorn the wretch they basely fear :
(For arm'd in impudence, mankind he braves, 485
And meditates new cheats on all his slaves ;
Tho' shameless as he is, to face these eyes
Is what he dares not ; if he dares, he dies)
Tell him, all terms, all commerce I decline,
Nor share his council, nor his battle join : } 490
For once deceiv'd, was his ; but twice, were mine.
No—let the stupid prince, whom Jove deprives
Of sense and justice, run where frenzy drives ;
His gifts are hateful : kings of such a kind
Stand but as slaves before a noble mind. 495

injury which Agamemnon offered to Achilles is still upper-most in his thoughts ; he has but just dismissed it, and now returns to it again. These repetitions are far from being faults in Achilles's wrath, whose anger is perpetually breaking out upon the same injury.

v. 494. *Kings of such a kind stand but as slaves before a noble mind.*] The words in the Greek, are, *I despise him as a Carian*. The Carians were people of Bœotia, the first that sold their valour, and were ready to fight for any that gave them their pay. This was looked upon as the vilest of actions in those heroical ages. I think there is at present but one nation in the world distinguished for this practice, who are ready to prostitute their hands to kill for the highest bidder.

Eustathius endeavours to give many other solutions of this place, as that *ἐν καρὸς* may be mistaken for *ἐξκαρὸς* from *ἐξκαρῆς*, *pediculus* ; but this is too mean and trivial to be Homer's sentiment. There is more probability that it comes from *καρῆς*, *καρὸς* and so *καρὸς* by the change of the Eta in Alpha ; and then the meaning will be,

Not tho' he proffer'd all himself possest,
 And all his rapine could from others wrest;
 Not all the golden tides of wealth that crown
 The many-peopled Orchomenian town;
 Not all proud Thebes' unrival'd walls contain, 500
 The world's great empress on the Egyptian plain,

that Achilles hates him as much as hell or death, agree-
 able to what he had said a little before.

Ἐχθρὸς μὲν μοί κεῖνος ὁμῶς αἶδωο πύλῃσι.

v. 500. *Not all proud Thebes', etc.*] These several circumstances concerning Thebes are thought by some not to suit with that emotion with which Achilles here is supposed to speak: but the contrary will appear true, if we reflect that nothing is more usual for persons transported with anger, than to insist, and return to such particulars as most touch them; and that exaggeration is a figure extremely natural in passion. Achilles therefore, by shewing the greatness of Thebes, its wealth, and extent, does in effect but shew the greatness of his own soul, and of that insuperable resentment which renders all these riches (though the greatest in the world) contemptible in his sight, when he compares them with the indignity his honour has received.

v. 500. *Proud Thebes' unrival'd walls, etc.*] “The city which the Greeks call Thebes, the Ægyptians “Diospolis (says Diodorus, *lib. 1. par. 2.*) was in circuit a hundred and forty *stadia*, adorned with stately “buildings, magnificent temples, and rich donations. “It was not only the most beautiful and noble city of “Ægypt, but of the whole world. The fame of its “wealth and grandeur was so celebrated in all parts, “that the poet took notice of it in these words;

ἔδ' ὅσα Θήβας

Αἰγυπτίας, ὅθι πλείστα δόμοις ἐν κλήματ' αἰετται,

(That spreads her conquests o'er a thousand states,
And pours her heroes thro' a hundred gates,

Αἰδ' ἑκατόμυλοι εἰσι, διηκόσιοι δ' ἂν ἐκάστην

Ἀνέρες ἑξοιχνεῦσι σὺν ἵπποισι καὶ ὄχεσφιν. v. 381.

“ Though others affirm it had not a hundred gates,
“ but several vast porches to the temples; from whence
“ the city was called the *hundred-gated*, only as having
“ many gates. Yet it is certain it furnished twenty
“ thousand chariots of war; for there were a hundred
“ stables along the river, from Memphis to Thebes to-
“ wards Libya, each of which contained two hundred
“ horses, the ruins whereof are shewn at this day. The
“ princes from time to time made it their care to beau-
“ tify and enlarge this city, to which none under the
“ sun was equal in the many and magnificent treasures
“ of gold, silver, and ivory; with innumerable *colos-*
“ *suses*, and obelisks of one intire stone. There
“ were four temples admirable in beauty and greatness,
“ the most ancient of which was in circuit thirteen
“ *stadia*, and five and forty cubits in height, with a
“ wall of four and twenty foot broad. The ornaments
“ and offerings within were agreeable to this magnifi-
“ cence, both in value and workmanship. The fabric
“ is yet remaining, but the gold, silver, ivory, and pre-
“ cious stones were ransacked by the Persians, when
“ Cambyfes burned the temples of Ægypt. There were
“ found in the rubbish above three hundred talents of
“ gold, and no less than two thousand three hundred
“ of silver.” The same author proceeds to give many
instances of the magnificence of this great city. The
description of the sepulchres of their kings, and parti-
cularly that of Osymanduas, is perfectly astonishing, to
which I refer the reader.

Strabo farther informs us, that the kings of Thebes,
extended their conquests as far as Scythia, Bactria, and
India.

Two hundred horsemen, and two hundred cars
 From each wide portal issuing to the wars) 505
 Tho' bribes were heap'd on bribes, in number more
 Than dust in fields, or sands along the shore ;
 Should all these offers for my friendship call ;
 'Tis he that offers, and I scorn them all.
 Atrides' daughter never shall be led 510
 (An ill-match'd consort) to Achilles' bed ;
 Like golden Venus tho' she charm'd the heart,
 And vy'd with Pallas in the works of art.
 Some greater Greek let those high nuptials grace,
 I hate alliance with a tyrant's race. 515
 If heav'n restore me to my realms with life,
 The rev'rend Peleus shall elect my wife ;
 Thessalian nymphs there are, of form divine,
 And kings that sue to mix their blood with mine.
 Blest in kind love, my years shall glide away, 520
 Content with just hereditary sway ;
 There deaf for ever to the martial strife,
 Enjoy the dear prerogative of life.
 + Life is not to be bought with heaps of gold ;
 + Not all Apollo's Pythian treasures hold, 525

v. 525. *Not all Apollo's Pythian treasures.*] The temple of Apollo at Delphos was the richest temple in the world, by the offerings that were brought to it from all parts ; there were statues of massy gold of a human size, figures of animals in gold, and several other treasures. A great sign of its wealth is, that the Phocians pillaged it in the time of Philip the son of Amyntas, which gave occasion to the holy war. It is said to have

Or Troy once held, in peace and pride of sway, +
 Can bribe the poor possession of a day ! +
 Lost herds and treasures, we by arms regain,
 And steeds unrivall'd on the dusty plain :
 But from our lips the vital spirit fled, 530
 Returns no more to wake the silent dead.
 My fates long since by Thetis were disclos'd,
 And each alternate, life or fame propos'd ;

been pillaged before, and that the great riches of which Homer speaks, had been carried away. Eustathius.

v. 530. *The vital spirit fled, returns no more.*] Nothing sure could be better imagined, or more strongly paint Achilles's resentment, than this commendation which Homer puts into his mouth of a long and peaceable life. That hero, whose very soul was possessed with love of glory, and who preferred it to life itself, lets his anger prevail over this his darling passion : he despises even glory, when he cannot obtain that, and enjoy his revenge at the same time ; and rather than lay this aside, becomes the very reverse of himself.

v. 532. *My fates long since by Thetis were disclos'd.*] It was very necessary for Homer to put the reader more than once in mind of this piece of Achilles's story, there is a remark of monsieur de la Motte, which deserves to be transcribed intire on this occasion.

“ The generality of people, who do not know Achilles by the Iliad, and who upon a most noted fable conceive him invulnerable all but in the heel, find it ridiculous that he should be placed at the head of heroes ; so true it is, that the idea of valour implies it always in danger.

“ Should a giant, well armed, fight against a legion of children, whatever slaughter he should make, the pity any one would have for them, would not turn at all to any admiration of him ; and the more he

Here, if I stay, before the Trojan town,

Short is my date, but deathless my renown :

535

If I return, I quit immortal praise

For years on years, and long-extended days.

Convinc'd, tho' late, I find my fond mistake,

And warn the Greeks the wiser choice to make :

To quit these shores, their native seats enjoy,

540

Nor hope the fall of heaven-defended Troy.

“ should applaud his own courage, the more one would
“ be offended at his pride.

“ Achilles had been in this case, if Homer, besides
“ all the superiority of strength he has given him, had
“ not found the art of putting likewise his greatness of
“ soul out of all suspicion.

“ He has perfectly well succeeded in feigning that
“ Achilles before his setting out to the Trojan war, was
“ sure of meeting his death. The destinies had pro-
“ posed to him by the mouth of Thetis, the alternative
“ of a long and happy, but obscure life, if he staid in
“ his own state ; or of a short, but glorious one, if he
“ embraced the vengeance of the Greeks. He wishes
“ for glory in contempt of death ; and thus all his ac-
“ tions, all his motions are so many proofs of his cou-
“ rage ; he runs, in hastening his exploits, to a death
“ which he knows infallibly attends him ; what does it
“ avail him, that he routs every thing almost without re-
“ sistance ? it is still true, that he every moment en-
“ counters and faces the sentence of his destiny, and that
“ he devotes himself generously for glory. Homer was
“ so sensible that this idea must force a concern for his
“ hero, that he scatters it throughout his poem, to the
“ end that the reader having it always in view, may e-
“ scuse Achilles even for what he performs without the
“ least danger.”

Jove's arm display'd asserts her from the skies ;
 Her hearts are strengthen'd, and her glories rise.
 Go then, to Greece report our fix'd design ;
 Bid all your counsels, all your armies join, 545
 Let all your forces, all your arts conspire,
 To save the ships, the troops, the chiefs from fire.
 One stratagem has fail'd, and others will ;
 Ye find, Achilles is unconquer'd still.
 Go then——digest my message as ye may—— 550
 But here this night let rev'rend Phoenix stay :
 His tedious toils, and hoary hairs demand
 A peaceful death in Pthia's friendly land.
 But whether he remain, or sail with me,
 His age be sacred, and his will be free. 555

The son of Peleus ceas'd : the chiefs around
 In silence wrapt, in consternation drown'd,
 Attend the stern reply. Then Phoenix rose ;
 (Down his white beard a stream of sorrow flows)
 And while the fate of suff'ring Greece he mourn'd, 560
 With accent weak these tender words return'd.

Divine Achilles ! wilt thou then retire,
 And leave our hosts in blood, our fleets on fire !
 If wrath so dreadful fill thy ruthless mind,
 How shall thy friend, thy Phoenix, stay behind ? 565

v. 565. How shall thy friend, thy Phoenix stay behind ?
 This is a strong argument to persuade Achilles to stay,
 but dressed up in the utmost tenderness : the venerable
 old man rises with tears in his eyes, and speaks the
 language of affection. He tells him that he would not

The royal Peleus, when from Pthia's coast
He sent thee early to th' Achaian host ;

be left behind him, though the Gods would free him from the burden of old age, and restore him to his youth : but in the midst of so much fondness, he couches a powerful argument to persuade him not to return home, by adding that his father sent him to be his guide and guardian ; Phœnix ought not therefore to follow the inclinations of Achilles, but Achilles the directions of Phœnix. Eustathius.

“ The art of this speech of Phœnix (says Dionysius, “ *περὶ ἐξηρατισμένων*, lib. I) consists in his seeming to “ agree with all that Achilles had said : Achilles, he “ sees, will depart, and he must go along with him ; “ but in assigning the reasons why he must go with “ him, he proves that Achilles ought not to depart. “ And thus while he seems only to shew his love to his “ pupil in his inability to stay behind him, he indeed “ challenges the other's gratitude for the benefits he “ had conferred upon him in his infancy and education. “ At the same that he moves Achilles, he gratifies “ Agamemnon ; and that this was the real design which “ he disguised in that manner, we are informed by “ Achilles himself in the reply he makes : for Homer, “ and all the authors that treat of this figure, generally “ contrived it so, that the answers made to these kind “ of speeches, discover all the art and structure of them. “ Achilles therefore asks him,

*Is it for him these tears are taught to flow ?
For him these sorrows ? for my mortal foe ?*

“ You see the scholar reveals the art and dissimulation “ of his master ; and as Phœnix had recounted the “ benefits done him, he takes off that expostulation by “ promising to divide his empire with him, as may be “ seen in the same answer.”

v. 567. *He sent thee early to th' Achaian host.*] Achil-

Thy youth as then in sage debates unskill'd,
 And new to perils of the direful field:
 He bade me teach thee all the ways of war ; 570
 To shine in councils, and in camps to dare.
 Never, ah never let me leave thy side !
 No time shall part us, and no fate divide.
 Not tho' the God, that breath'd my life, restore
 The bloom I boasted, and the port I bore, 575
 When Greece of old beheld my youthful flames.
 (Delightful Greece, the land of lovely dames.)
 My father, faithless to my mother's arms,
 Old as he was, ador'd a stranger's charms.

les (say Eustathius) according to some of the ancients, was but twelve years old when he went to the wars of Troy (*πέμπε νήπιον*;) and it may be gathered from what the poet here relates of the education of Achilles under Phœnix, that the fable of his being tutored by Chiron was the invention of latter ages, and unknown to Homer.

Mr. Bayle, in his article of Achilles, has very well proved this. He might indeed, as he grew up, have learned music and physic of Chiron, without having him formally as his tutor; for it is plain from this speech, that he was put under the direction of Phœnix as his governor in morality, when his father sent him along with him to the siege of Troy.

v. 578. *My father, faithless to my mother's arms, etc.*] Homer has been blamed for introducing two long stories into this speech of Phœnix: this concerning himself is said not to be in the proper place, and what Achilles must needs have heard over and over: it also gives (say they) a very ill impression of Phœnix himself, and makes him appear a very unfit person to be a teacher of morality to the young hero. It is answered, that

I try'd what youth could do (at her desire) 580
 To win the damsel, and prevent my fire.
 My fire with curses loads my hated head,
 And cries, "Ye furies ! barren be his bed."

though Achilles might have known the story before in general, it is probable Phœnix had not until now so pressing an occasion to make him discover the excess his fury had transported him to, in attempting the life of his own father : the whole story tends to represent the dreadful effects of passion : and I cannot but think the example is the more forcible, as it is drawn from his own experience.

v. 581 *To win the damsel.*] The counsel that this mother gives to her son Phœnix is the same that Achitophel gave to Absalom, to hinder him from ever being reconciled to David. *Et ait Achitophel ad Absalom : ingredi ad concubinas patris tui, quas dimisit ad custodiendam domum, ut cum audierit omnis Israel quod sedaveris patrem tuum, roborentur tecum manus eorum.* 2 Sam. xiv. 20. Dacier.

v. 581. *Prevent my fire.*] This decency of Homer is worthy observation, who to remove all the disagreeable ideas, which might proceed from this intrigue of Phœnix with his father's mistress, took care to give us to understand in one single word, that Amyntor had no share in her affections, which makes the action of Phœnix the more excusable. He does it only in obedience to his mother, in order to reclaim his father, and oblige him to live like her husband : besides, his father had yet no commerce with this mistress to whose love he pretended. Had it been otherwise, and had Phœnix committed this sort of incest, Homer would neither have presented this image to his reader, nor Peleus chosen Phœnix to be governor to Achilles. Dacier.

Infernal

Infernal Jove, the vengeful fiends below,
 And ruthless Proserpine, confirm'd his vow. 585
 Despair and grief distract my lab'ring mind ;
 Gods ! what a crime my impious heart design'd?

v. 584. *Infernal Jove.*] The Greek is *Ζεύς τε καὶ αἰαχέ-
 θονιος*. The ancients gave the name of Jupiter not only
 to the God of heaven, but likewise to the God of hell,
 as is seen here ; and to the God of the sea, as appears
 from Æschylus. They thereby meant to shew that one
 sole deity governed the world ; and it was to teach the
 same truth, that the ancient statuarics made statues of Ju-
 piter, which had three eyes. Priam had one of them
 in that manner in the court of his palace, which was
 there in Laomedon's time : after the taking of Troy,
 when the Greeks shared the booty, it fell to Sthenelus's
 lot, who carried it into Greece. Dacier.

v. 586. *Despair and grief distract, etc.*] I have ta-
 ken the liberty to replace here four verses which Aristar-
 chus had cut out, because of the horror which the idea
 gave him of a son who is going to kill his father ; but per-
 haps Aristarchus's niceness was too great. These verses
 seem to me necessary, and have a very good effect : for
 Phoenix's aim is to shew Achilles, that unless we overcome
 our wrath, we are exposed to commit the greatest crimes :
 he was going to kill his own father. Achilles in the
 same manner is going to let his father Phoenix and all
 the Greeks perish, if he does not appease his wrath.
 Plutarch relates these four verses in his treatise of read-
 ing the poets ; and adds, " Aristarchus, frightened at
 " this horrible crime, cut out these verses ; but they
 " do very well in this place, and on this occasion, Phœ-
 " nix intending to shew Achilles what wrath is, and to
 " what abominable excesses it hurries men, who do not
 " obey reason, and who refuse to follow the counsels
 " of those that advise them." These sort of curtailings
 from Homer, often contrary to all reason, gave room

I thought (but some kind God that thought suppress)
 To plunge the ponyard in my father's breast:
 Then meditate my flight; my friends in vain 590
 With pray'rs intreat me, and with force detain;
 On fat of rams, black bulls, and brawny swine,
 They daily feast, with draughts of fragrant wine:
 Strong gaurds they plac'd, and watch'd nine nights intire;
 The roofs and porches flam'd with constant fire. 595
 The tenth, I forc'd the gates, unseen of all;
 And favour'd by the night, o'erleap'd the wall.
 My travels thence thro' spacious Greece extend;
 In Pthia's court at last my labours end.
 Your fire receiv'd me, as his son carefs'd, 600
 With gifts enrich'd, and with possessions bless'd.
 'The strong Dolopians thenceforth own'd my reign,
 And all the coast that runs along the main.
 By love to thee his bounties I repaid,
 And early wisdom to thy soul convey'd: 605
 Great as thou art, my lessons made thee brave,
 A child I took thee, but a hero gave.
 Thy infant breast a like affection show'd;
 Still in my arms, (an ever-pleasing load)

to Lucian to feign that being in the fortunate islands,
 he asked Homer a great many questions. Among other
 " things (says he in his second book of his true history)
 " I asked him whether he had made all the verses
 " which had been rejected in his poem? he assured me
 " they were all his own, which made me laugh at the
 " impertinent and bold criticisms of Zenodorus and A-
 " ristarchus, who had retrenched them." Dacier.

Or at my knee, by Phœnix would'st thou stand; 610

No food was grateful but from Phœnix' hand.

I pass my watchings o'er thy helpless years,

The tender labours the compliant cares ;

The Gods (I thought) revers'd their hard decree,

And Phœnix felt a father's joys in thee : 615

Thy growing virtues justify'd my cares,

And promis'd comfort to my silver hairs.

Now be thy rage, thy fatal rage, resign'd ;

A cruel heart ill suits a manly mind :

The gods (the only great, and only wise) 620

Are mov'd by off'rings, vows, and sacrifice ;

Offending man their high compassion wins,

And daily pray'rs atone for daily sins.

Pray'rs are Jove's daughters, of celestial race,

Lame are their feet, and wrinkled is their face ; 625

v. 612. *I pass my watchings o'er thy helpless years.*]

In the original of this place Phœnix tells Achilles, that as he placed him in his infancy on his lap, *he has often cast up the wine he had drank upon his cloaths*. I wish I had any authority to say these verses were foisted into the text: for though the idea be indeed natural, it must be granted to be so very gross, as to be utterly unworthy of Homer; nor do I see any colour to soften the meanness of it: such images in any age or country, must have been too nauseous to be described.

v. 624. *Pray'rs are Jove's daughters.*] Nothing can be more beautiful, noble, or religious, than this divine allegory. We have here Goddesses of Homer's creation; he sets before us their pictures in lively colours, and gives these fancied beings all the features that resemble mankind who offer injuries, or have recourse to prayers.

With humble mien, and with dejected eyes,
 Constant they follow, where Injustice flies :
 Injustice swift, erect, and unconfin'd,
 Sweeps the wide earth, and tramples o'er mankind,
 While pray'rs, to heal her wrongs, move slow behind.

Prayers are said to be the daughters of Jove, because it is he who teaches man to pray. They are lame, because the posture of a suppliant is with his knee on the ground. They are wrinkled, because those that pray have a countenance of dejection and sorrow. Their eyes are turned aside, because through an awful regard to heaven they dare not lift them thither. They follow Ate or Injury, because nothing but prayers can atone for the wrongs that are offered by the injurious. Ate is said to be strong and swift of foot, *etc.* because injurious men are swift to do mischief. This is the explanation of Eustathius, with whom Dacier agrees ; but when she allows the circumstance of lameness to intimate the custom of kneeling in prayer, she forgets that this contradicts her own assertion in one of the remarks on Iliad 7. where she affirms that no such custom was used by the Greeks. And indeed the contrary seems inferred in several places in Homer, particularly where Achilles says in the 608th verse of the eleventh book, *The Greeks shall stand round his knees supplicating to him.* The phrases in that language that signify praying, are derived from the knee, only as it was usual to lay hold on the knee of the person to whom they supplicated.

A modern author imagines Ate to signify *divine justice* ; a notion in which he is single, and repugnant to all the mythologists. Besides, the whole context in this place, and the very application of the allegory to the present case of Achilles, whom he exhorts to be moved by prayers, notwithstanding the injustice done him by Agamemnon, makes the contrary evident.

Book IX. H O M E R's I L I A D. 209
 Who hears these daughters of almighty Jove, 631
 For him they mediate to the throne above :
 When man rejects the humble suit they make,
 The fire revenges for the daughters sake ;
 From Jove commission'd, fierce Injustice then 633
 Descends, to punish unrelenting men.
 Oh let not headlong passion bear the sway ;
 These reconciling Goddesses obey :
 Due honours to the seed of Jove belong ;
 Due honours calm the fierce and bend the strong. 640
 Were these not paid thee by the terms we bring,
 Were rage still harbour'd in the haughty king.
 Nor Greece, nor all her fortunes should engage
 Thy friend to plead against so just a rage.
 But since what honour asks, the gen'ral sends, 645
 And sends by those whom most thy heart commends,
 The best and noblest of the Grecian train ;
 Permit not these to sue, and sue in vain !

v. 643. *Nor Greece, nor all her fortunes.*] Plato
 in the third book of his republic condemns this passage,
 and thinks it very wrong, that Phoenix should say to A-
 chilles, that if they did not offer him great presents, he
 would not advise him to be appeased: but I think there
 is some injustice in this censure, and that Plato has not
 rightly entered into the sense of Phoenix, who does not
 look upon these presents on the side of interest, but ho-
 nour, as a mark of Agamemnon's repentance, and of
 the satisfaction he is ready to make: wherefore he says,
 that honour has a mighty power over great spirits.
 Dacier.

v. 648. *Permit not these to sue, and sue in vain!*] In

Let me (my son) an ancient fact unfold,

A great example drawn from times of old;

650

the original it is—— τῶν μὲν σὺ γε μῦθον ἐλέγξῃς Μηδὲ πόδας.—— I am pretty confident there is not any manner of speaking like this used throughout all Homer; nor two substantives so oddly coupled to a verb, as μῦθον and πόδας in this place. We may indeed meet with such little affectations in Ovid,—— *Aurigam pariter animaque rotisque, Expulit*—— and the like; but the taste of the ancients in general was too good for these fooleries. I must have leave to think the verse Μηδὲ πόδας, etc. an interpolation: the sense is compleat without it, and the latter part of the line, πρὶν δ' ἔτι νημεσσηντὸν κελχολῶεσθαι, seems but a tautology, after what is said in the six verses preceding.

v. 649. *Let me, my son, an ancient fact unfold.*] Phoenix, says Eustathius, lays down, as the foundation of his story, that great men in former ages were always appeased by presents and intreaties; and to confirm this position, he brings Meleager as an instance; but it may be objected that Meleager was an ill chosen instance, being a person whom no intreaties could move. The superstructure of this story seems not to agree with the foundation. Eustathius solves the difficulty thus. Homer did not intend to give an instance of a hero's compliance with the intreaties of his friends, but to shew that they who did not comply, were sufferers themselves in the end. So that the connection of the story is thus: the heroes of former times were used, always to be won by presents and intreaties; Meleager only was obstinate, and suffered because he was so.

The length of this narration cannot be taxed as unreasonable; it was at full leisure in the tent, and in the night, a time of no action. Yet I cannot answer but the tale may be tedious to a modern reader. I have translated it therefore with all possible shortness, as will appear upon a comparison. The piece itself is very

Hear what our fathers were, and what their praise,
Who conquer'd their revenge in former days.

Where Calydon on rocky mountains stands,
Once fought th'Ætolian and Curetian bands ;
To guard it those, to conquer, these advance ; 655
And mutual deaths were dealt with mutual chance.

The silver Cynthia bade Contention rise,
In vengeance of neglected sacrifice ;
On Oeneus' fields she sent a monstrous boar,
That levell'd harvests, and whole forests tore : 660
This beast, (when many a chief his tusks had slain)
Great Meleager stretch'd along the plain.

Then, for his spoils, a new debate arose,
The neighbour nations thence commencing foes.
Strong as they were, the bold Curetes fail'd, 665
While Meleager's thund'ring arm prevail'd :
'Till rage at length inflam'd his lofty breast,
(For rage invades the wisest and the best.)

Curs'd by Althæa, to his wrath he yields,
And in his wife's embrace forgets the fields. 670

" (She from Marpessa sprung, divinely fair,
" And matchless Idas, more than man in war :
" The God of day ador'd the mother's charms ;
" Against the God the father bent his arms :

valuable, as it preserves to us a part of ancient history that had otherwise been entirely lost, as Quintilian has remarked. The same critic commends Homer's manner of relating it : *Narrare quis significantius potest quam qui Curetum Ætolorumque prælia exponit ?* Lib. 10. c. 1.

" Th' afflicted pair, their sorrows to proclaim, 675
 " From Cleopatra chang'd this daughter's name,
 " And call'd Alcyone; a name to show
 " The father's grief, the mourning mother's woe.)
 To her the chief retir'd from stern debate,
 But found no peace from fierce Althæa's hate; 680
 Althæa's hate th' unhappy warrior drew,
 Whose luckless hand his royal uncle flew;
 She beat the ground, and call'd the pow'rs beneath
 On her own son to wreak her brother's death:
 Hell heard her curses from the realms profound, 685
 And the red fiends that walk the nightly round.
 In vain Ætolia her deliv'rer waits,
 War shakes her walls, and thunders at her gates.
 She sent ambassadors, a chosen band,
 Priests of the Gods, and elders of the land; 690
 Besought the chief to save the sinking state:
 Their pray'rs were urgent, and their proffers great:
 (Full fifty acres of the richest ground,
 Half pasture green, and half with vineyards crown'd.)

v. 677. *Alcyone, a name to show*, etc.] It appears (says madam Dacier) by this passage, and by others already observed, that the Greeks often gave names, as did the Hebrews, not only with respect to the circumstances, but likewise to the accidents which happened to the fathers and mothers of those they named: thus Cleopatra is called Alcyone, from the lamentations of her mother. I cannot but think this digression concerning Idas and Marpessa too long, and not very much to the purpose.

Book IX. H O M E R's I L I A D. 213
 His suppliant father, aged Oeneus, came ; 695
 His sisters follow'd ; ev'n the vengeful dame,
 Althæa sues ; his friends before him fall :
 He stands relentless, and rejects 'em all :
 Meanwhile the victor's shouts ascend the skies ;
 The walls are scal'd ; the rolling flames arise ; 700
 At length his wife (a form divine) appears,
 With piercing cries, and supplicating tears ;
 She paints the horrors of a conquer'd town,
 The heroes slain, the palaces o'erthrown,
 The matrons ravish'd, the whole race enslav'd : 705
 The warrior heard, he vanquish'd, and he sav'd.
 Th' Ætolians, long disdain'd, now took their turn,
 And left the chief their broken faith to mourn.
 Learn hence, betimes to curb pernicious ire,
 Nor stay, 'till yonder fleets ascend in fire : 710
 Accept the presents ; draw thy conqu'ring sword ;
 And be amongst our guardian Gods ador'd.

v. 703. *She paints the horrors of a conquer'd town,
 The heroes slain, the palaces o'erthrown,
 The matrons ravish'd, the whole race enslav'd.*]

It is remarkable with what art Homer here in a few words sums up the miseries of a city taken by assault.

It had been unpardonable for Cleopatra to have made a long representation to Meleager of these miseries, when every moment that kept him from the battle could not be spared. It is also to be observed how perfectly the features of Meleager resemble Achilles ; they are both brave men, ambitious of glory, both of them described as giving victory to their several armies while they fought, and both of them implacable in their resentment. Eustathius.

Thus he : The stern Achilles thus reply'd.
 My second father, and my rev'rend guide :
 Thy friend, believe me, no such gifts demands, 715
 And asks no honours from a mortal's hands :
 Jove honours me, and favours my designs ;
 His pleasure guides me, and his will confines :
 And here I stay, (if such his high behest)
 While life's warm spirit beats within my breast. 720

v. 713. *Achilles's answer to Phœnix.*] The character of Achilles is excellently sustained in all his speeches : to Ulysses he returns a flat denial, and threatens to leave the Trojan shores in the morning : to Phœnix he gives a much gentler answer, and begins to mention Agamemnon with less disrespect, Ἀργείδην ἡρώϊ : after Ajax had spoken, he seems determined not to depart, but yet refuses to bear arms, until it is to defend his own squadron. Thus Achilles's character is every where of a-piece : he begins to yield, and not to have done so, would not have spoke him a man ; to have made him perfectly inexorable, had shewn him a monster. Thus the poet draws the heat of his passion cooling by slow degrees, which is very natural : to have done otherwise, had not been agreeable to Achilles's temper, nor the reader's expectation, to whom it would have been shocking to have seen him passing from the greatest storm of anger to a quiet calmness. Eustathius.

v. 720. *While life's warm spirit beats within my breast.*] Eustathius observes here with a great deal of penetration, that these words of Achilles include a sort of oracle, which he does not understand : for it sometimes happens, that men full of their objects say things, which, besides the sense natural and plain to every body, include another supernatural, which they themselves do not understand, and which is understood by those only who have penetration enough to see through

Yet hear one word, and lodge it in thy heart;
No more molest me on Atrides' part:
Is it for him these tears are taught to flow,
For him these sorrows? for my mortal foe?
A gen'rous friendship no cold medium knows, 725
Burns with one love, with one resentment glows;
One should our int'rests, and our passions be;
My friend must hate the man that injures me.
Do this, my Phoenix, 'tis a gen'rous part,
And share my realms, my honours, and my heart. 730
Let these return: our voyage, or our stay.
Rest undetermin'd 'till the dawning day.

He ceas'd; then order'd for the sage's bed
A warmer couch with num'rous carpets spread.
With that, stern Ajax his long silence broke, 735
And thus, impatient, to Ulysses spoke.

Hence let us go—why waste we time in vain?
See what effect our low submissions gain!

the obscurity of it. Thus Oedipus often speaks in Sophocles; and holy scripture furnishes us with great examples of enthusiastic speeches, which have a double sense. Here we manifestly see that Achilles in speaking a very simple and common thing, foretells without thinking of it, that his abode on that fatal shore will equal the course of his life, and consequently that he shall die there: and this double meaning gives a sensible pleasure to the reader. Dacier.

v. 737. *The speech of Ajax.*] I have before spoken of this short soldier-like speech of Ajax; Dionysius of Halicarnassus says of it, "That the person who intreats
" most, and with most liberty, who supplicates most,

Lik'd or not lik'd, his words we must relate,
 The Greeks expect them, and our heroes wait. 740
 Proud as he is, that iron-heart retains
 Its stubborn purpose, and his friends disdains.
 Stern, and unpitying ! if a brother bleed,
 On just atonement, we remit the deed ;
 A fire the slaughter of his son forgives ; 745
 The price of blood discharg'd, the murd'rer lives :
 The haughtiest hearts at length their rage resign,
 And gifts can conquer ev'ry soul but thine.
 The Gods that unrelenting breast have steel'd,
 And curs'd thee with a mind that cannot yield. 750
 One woman slave was ravish'd from thy arms :
 Lo, sev'n are offer'd, and of equal charms.
 Then hear, Achilles ! be of better mind ;
 Revere thy roof, and to thy guests be kind ;

“ and presses most, is Ajax.” It is probable that Ajax rises when he speaks the word, *Let us go*. He does not vouchsafe to address himself to Achilles, but turns himself to Ulysses, and speaks with a martial eloquence.

v. 746. *The price of blood discharg'd.*] It was the custom for the murderer to go into banishment one year ; but if the relations of the person murdered were willing, the criminal by paying them a certain fine, might buy off the exile, and remain at home. (It may not be amiss to observe, that *ποῖν*, *quasi* *φoῖν* properly signifies a mulct paid for murder.) Ajax sums up this argument with a great deal of strength : we see, says he, a brother forgive the murder of his brother, a father that of his son : but Achilles will not forgive the injury offered him by taking away one captive woman. Eustathius.

v. 754. *Revere thy roof, and to thy guests be kind.*]

Eustathius

And know the men, of all the Grecian host, 755
Who honour worth, and prize thy valour most.

O foul of battles, and thy people's guide !
(To Ajax thus the first of Greeks reply'd)
Well hast thou spoke ; but at the tyrant's name
My rage rekindles, and my soul's on flame : 760
'Tis just resentment, and becomes the brave ;
Disgrac'd, dithonour'd, like the vilest slave !
Return then, heroes ! and our answer bear,
The glorious combate is no more my care ;
Not 'till amidst yon' sinking navy slain, 765
The blood of Greeks shall dye the sable main ;
Not 'till the flames, by Hector's fury thrown,
Consume your vessels, and approach my own ;

Eustathius says there is some difficulty in the original of this place. Why should Ajax draw an argument to influence Achilles, by putting him in mind to reverence his own habitation? The latter part of the verse explains the former: we, says Ajax, are under your roof, and let that protect us from any ill usage ; send us not away from your house with contempt, who came hither as friends, as supplicants, as ambassadors.

v. 759. *Well hast thou spoke ; but at the tyrant's name my rage rekindles.*] We have here the true picture of an angry man, nothing can be better imagined to heighten Achilles's wrath ; he owns that reason will induce him to a reconciliation, but his anger is too great to listen to reason. He speaks with respect to them, but upon mentioning Agamemnon he flies into rage: anger is in nothing more like madness, than that madmen will talk sensibly enough upon any indifferent matter ; but upon the mention of the subject that caused their disorder, they fly out into their usual extravagance.

Just there, th' impetuous homicide shall stand,
There cease his battle, and there feel our hand, 770

This said, each prince a double goblet crown'd,
And cast a large libation on the ground ;
Then to their vessels, thro' the gloomy shades,
The chiefs return ; divine Ulysses leads.

Meantime Achilles' slaves prepar'd a bed, 775

With fleeces, carpets, and soft linen spread :
There, 'till the sacred morn restor'd the day,
In slumbers sweet the rev'rend Phoenix lay.

But in his inner tent, an ampler space,
Achilles slept ; and in his warm embrace
Fair Diomede of the Lesbian race. } 780

Last, for Patroclus was the couch prepar'd,
Whose nightly joys the beauteous Iphis shar'd :
Achilles to his friend consign'd her charms,
When Scyros fell before his conqu'ring arms. 785

And now th' elected chiefs, whom Greece had sent,
Pass'd thro' the hosts, and reach'd the royal tent.

Then rising all, with goblets in their hands,
The peers, and leaders of th'Achaian bands
Hail'd their return : Atrides first begun. 790

Say what success ? divine Laertes' son !
Achilles' high resolves declare to all ;
Returns the chief, or must our navy fall ?

Great king of nations ! (Ithacus reply'd)
Fix'd is his wrath, unconquer'd is his pride ; 795
He slight's thy friendship, thy proposals scorns,
And thus implor'd, with fiercer fury burns.

To save our army, and our fleets to free,
Is not his care : but left to Greece and thee.
Your eyes shall view, when morning paints the sky, 800
Beneath his oars the whitening billows fly,
Us too he bids our oars and sails employ,
Nor hope the fall of heav'n-protected Troy ;
For Jove o'er shades her with his arm divine,
Inspires her war, and bids her glory shine. 805
Such was his word : what farther he declar'd,
These sacred heralds and great Ajax heard.
But Phoenix in his tent the chief retains,
Safe to transport him to his native plains,
When morning dawns : if other he decree, 810
His age is sacred, and his choice is free.

v. 806. *Such was his word.*] It may be asked here why Ulysses speaks only of the answer which Achilles made him at first, and says nothing of the disposition to which the discourses of Ajax and Phoenix had brought him. The question is easily answered ; it is because Achilles is obstinate in his resentment ; and that if at length a little moved by Phoenix, and shaken by Ajax, he seemed disposed to take arms, it is not out of regard to the Greeks, but only to save his own squadron, when Hector, after having put the Greeks to the sword, shall come to insult it. Thus this inflexible man abates nothing of his rage. It is therefore prudent in Ulysses to make this report to Agamemnon, to the end that being put out of hopes of the aid with which he flattered himself, he may concert with the leaders of the army the measures necessary to save his fleet and troops. Eustathius.

Ulysses ceas'd : the great Achaian host,
 With sorrow seiz'd, in consternation lost,
 Attend the stern reply. Tydides broke
 The gen'ral silence, and undaunted spoke. 815
 Why should we gifts to proud Achilles send ?
 Or strive with pray'rs his haughty soul to bend ?
 His country's woes he glories to deride,
 And pray'rs will burst that swelling heart with pride.
 Be the fierce impulse of his rage obey'd ;! 820
 Our battles let him, or desert, or aid ;
 Then let him arm when Jove or he think fit ;
 That, to his madness, or to heav'n commit.
 What for ourselves we can, is always ours ;
 This night, let due repast refresh our pow'rs ; 825
 (For strength consists in spirits and in blood,
 And those are ow'd to gen'rous wine and food)
 But when the rosy messenger of day
 Strikes the blue mountains with her golden ray,
 Rang'd at the ships, let all our squadrons shine, 830
 In flaming arms, a long extended line : 1/

v. 816. *Why should we gifts, etc.*] This speech is admirably adapted to the character of Diomed, every word is animated with a martial courage, and worthy to be delivered by a gallant soldier. He advised fighting in the beginning of the book, and continues still in that opinion ; and he is no more concerned at the speech of Achilles now, than he was at that of Agamemnon before.

In the dread front let great Atrides stand,
The first in danger, as in high command.

Shouts of acclaim the list'ning heroes raise,

Then each to heav'n the due libations pays ;

835

'Till sleep descending o'er the tents, bestows

The grateful blessings of desir'd repose.

T H E
I L I A D.
B O O K X.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The night-adventure of Diomed and Ulysses.

UPON the refusal of Achilles to return to the army, the distress of Agamemnon is described in the most lively manner. He takes no rest that night, but passes through the camp, awaking the leaders, and contriving all possible methods for the public safety. Menelaus, Nestor, Ulysses, and Diomed, are employed in raising the rest of the captains. They call a council of war, and determine to send scouts into the enemy's camp, to learn their posture, and discover their intentions. Diomed undertakes this hazardous enterprize, and makes choice of Ulysses for his companion. In their passage they surprize Dolon, whom Hector had sent on a like design to the camp of the Grecians. From him they are informed of the situation of the Trojan and auxiliary forces, and particularly of Rhesus, and the Thracians who were lately arrived. They pass on with success; kill Rhesus, with several of his officers, and seize the famous horses of that prince, with which they return in triumph to the camp.

The same night continues; the scene lies in the two camps.

ALL night the chiefs before their vessels lay,
And lost in sleep the labours of the day:

All but the king ; with various thoughts oppress'd,
 His country's cares lay rowling in his breast.
 As when by light'nings Jove's ætherial pow'r 5
 Foretels the rattling hail, or weighty show'r,
 Or sends soft snows to whiten all the shore,
 Or bids the brazen throat of war to roar ;
 By fits one flash succeeds as one expires,
 And heav'n flames thick with momentary fires. 10

It is observable, says Eustathius, that the poet very artfully repairs the loss of the last day by this nocturnal stratagem ; and it is plain that such a contrivance was necessary : the army was dispirited, and Achilles inflexible ; but by the success of this adventure the scale is turned in favour of the Grecians.

v. 3. *All but the king, etc.*] Homer here with a very small alteration repeats the verses which begin the second book : he introduces Agamemnon with the same pomp as he did Jupiter ; he ascribes to the one the same watchfulness over men, as the other exercised over the Gods, and Jove and Agamemnon are the only persons awake, while heaven and earth are asleep. Eustathius.

v. 7. *Or sends soft snows.*] Scaliger's criticism against this passage, that it never lightens and snows at the same time, is sufficiently refuted by experience. See Bossu of the epic poem, lib. 3. c. 7. and Barnes's note on this place.

v. 8. *Or bids the brazen throat of war to roar.*] There is something very noble and sublime in this image : the *vast jaws of war* is an expression that very poetically represents the voraciousness of war, and gives us a lively idea of an insatiate monster. Eustathius.

v. 9. *By fits one flash succeeds, etc.*] It requires some skill in Homer to take the chief point of his similitudes ; he has often been misunderstood in that respect, and his comparisons have frequently been strained to comply

So bursting frequent from Atrides' breast,
 Sighs following sighs his inward fears confess.
 Now o'er the fields, dejected, he surveys
 From thousand Trojan fires the mounting blaze ;
 Hears in the passing wind their music blow, 15
 And makes distinct the voices of the foe.
 Now looking backwards to the fleet and coast,
 Anxious he sorrows for th' endanger'd host.
 He rends his hairs, in sacrifice to Jove,
 And vows to him that ever lives above : 20

with the fancies of commentators. This comparison which is brought to illustrate the frequency of Agamemnon's sighs, has been usually thought to represent in general the groans of the king ; whereas what Homer had in his view, was only the quick succession of them.

v. 13. *Now o'er the fields, etc.*] Aristotle answers a criticism of some censurers of Homer on this place. They asked how it was that Agamemnon, shut up in his tent in the night, could see the Trojan camp at one view, and the fleet at another, as the poet represents it ? it is (says Aristotle) only a metaphorical manner of speech ; *to cast one's eye*, means but *to reflect upon*, or *to revolve in one's mind* : and that employed Agamemnon's thoughts in his tent, which had been the chief object of his eyes the day before.

v. 19. *He rends his hairs in sacrifice to Jove.*] I know this action of Agamemnon has been taken only as a common expression of grief, and so indeed it was rendered by Accius, as cited by Tully, Tusc. Quæst. l. 3. *Scindens dolore identidem intonsam comam*. But whoever reads the context will, I believe, be of opinion, that Jupiter is mentioned here on no other account than as he was applied to in the offering of these hairs, in an humble

Inly he groans ; while glory and despair
Divide his heart, and wage a doubtful war.

A thousand cares his lab'ring breast revolves ;
To seek sage Nestor now the chief resolves,
With him, in wholesome counsels, to debate 25
What yet remains to save th' afflicted state.
He rose, and first he cast his mantle round,
Next on his feet the shining sandals bound ;

supplication to the offended deity, who had so lately manifested his anger.

v. 27. *He rose, and first he cast his mantle round.*] I fancy it will be entertaining to the reader, to observe how well the poet at all times suits his descriptions to the circumstances of the persons ; we must remember that this book continues the actions of one night ; the whole army is now asleep, and Homer takes this opportunity to give us a description of several of his heroes suitable to their proper characters. Agamemnon, who is every where described as anxious for the good of his people, is kept awake by a fatherly care for their preservation. Menelaus, for whose sake the Greeks had suffered so greatly, shares all their misfortunes, and is restless while they are in danger. Nestor, a provident, wise, old man, sacrifices his rest even in the extremity of age, to his love for his country. Ulysses, a person next to Nestor in wisdom, is ready at the first summons ; he finds it hard, while the Greeks suffer, to compose himself to sleep, but is easily awaked to march to its defence ; but Diomed, who is every where described as a daring warrior, sleeps unconcerned at the nearness of the enemy, but is not awaked without some violence : he is said to be asleep, but he sleeps like a soldier in complete arms.

I could not pass over one circumstance in this place in relation to Nestor. It is a pleasure to see what care

A lion's yellow spoils his back conceal'd;
 His warlike hand a pointed jav'lin held. 30
 Meanwhile his brother, prest with equal woes,
 Alike deny'd the gifts of soft repose,
 Laments for Greece; that in his cause before
 So much had suffer'd, and must suffer more.
 A leopard's spotted hide his shoulders spread; 35
 A brazen helmet glitter'd on his head:
 Thus (with a jav'lin in his hand) he went
 To wake Atrides in the royal tent.
 Already wak'd, Atrides he descri'd,
 His armour buckling at his vessel's side. 40
 Joyful they met; the Spartan thus begun:
 Why puts my brother his bright armour on!
 Sends he some spy, amidst these silent hours,
 To try yon' camp, and watch the Trojan pow'rs?

the poet takes of his favourite counsellor: he describes him lying in a soft bed, wraps him up in a warm cloak, to preserve his age from the coldness of the night: but Diomed, a gallant, young hero, sleeps upon the ground in open air; and indeed every warrior is drest in arms peculiar to that season: the hide of a lion or leopard is what they all put on, being not to engage an enemy, but to meet their friends in council. Eustathius.

v. 43. *Sends he some spy, etc.*] Menelaus in this place starts a design, which is afterwards proposed by Nestor in council; the poet knew that the project would come with greater weight from the age of the one, than from the youth of the other; and that the valiant would be ready to execute a design, which so venerable a counsellor had formed. Eustathius.

But say, what hero shall sustain that task?

45

Such bold exploits uncommon courage ask,

Guideless, alone, thro' night's dark shade to go,

And 'midst a hostile camp explore the foe?

To whom the king. In such distress we stand,

No vulgar counsels our affairs demand;

50

Greece to preserve, is now no easy part,

But asks high wisdom, deep design, and art.

For Jove averse our humble pray'r denies,

And bows his head to Hector's sacrifice.

What eye has witness'd, or what ear believ'd,

55

In one great day, by one great arm achiev'd,

Such wond'rous deeds as Hector's hand has done,

And we beheld the last revolving sun?

v. 57. *Such wond'rous deeds as Hector's hand, etc.*] We hear Agamemnon in this place launching into the praises of a gallant enemy; but if any one think that he raises the actions of Hector too high, and sets him above Achilles himself, this objection will vanish, if he considers that he commends him as the bravest of mere men, but still he is not equal to Achilles, who was descended from a goddess. Agamemnon undoubtedly had Achilles in his thoughts when he says,

Sprung from no God, etc.

But his anger will not let him even name the man whom he thus obliquely praises.

Eustathius proceeds to observe, that the poet ascribes the gallant exploits of Hector to his piety; and had he not been favoured by Jove, he had not been thus victorious.

He also remarks that there is a double tautology in this

What honours the belov'd of Jove adorn !
 Sprung from no God, and of no goddess born, 60
 Yet such his acts, as Greeks unborn shall tell,
 And curse the battle where their fathers fell.

Now speed thy hasty course along the fleet,
 There call great Ajax, and the prince of Crete ;
 Ourself to hoary Nestor will repair ; 65
 To keep the guards on duty, be his care ;
 (For Nestor's influence best that quarter guides,
 Whose son with Merion, o'er the watch presides.)
 To whom the Spartan : These thy orders born,
 Say shall I stay, or with dispatch return ? 70
 There shalt thou stay, (the king of men reply'd)
 Else may we miss to meet, without a guide,
 The paths so many, and the camp so wide. }

this speech of Agamemnon, as *δητὰ καὶ δολιχόν, μέγμερα
 μητίσασθαι* and *ἔργα ἔρρεξε*. This proceeds from the won-
 der which the king endeavours to express at the greatness
 of Hector's actions : he labours to make his words an-
 swer the great idea he had conceived of them ; and while
 his mind dwells upon the same object, he falls into the
 same manner of expressing it. This is very natural to a
 person in his circumstances, whose thoughts are as it were
 pent up, and struggle for an utterance.

v. 73. *The paths so many, etc.*] It is plain from this
 verse, as well as from many others, that the art of for-
 tification was in some degree of perfection in Homer's
 days : here are lines drawn, that traverse the camp e-
 very way ; the ships are drawn up in the manner of a
 rampart, and Sally ports made at proper distances, that
 they might without difficulty either retire or issue out, as
 the occasion should require. Eustathius.

Still, with your voice, the slothful soldiers raise,
 Urge by their father's fame, their future praise. 75

× Forget we now our state and lofty birth;
 × Not titles here, but works, must prove our worth.
 To labour is the lot of man below:

And when Jove gave us life, he gave us woe.

 'This said each parted to his sev'ral cares; 80
 The king to Nestor's fable ship repairs;
 The sage protector of the Greeks he found
 Stretch'd in his bed, with all his arms around;
 The various colour'd scarf, the shield he rears,
 The shining helmet, and the pointed spears: 85
 The dreadful weapons of the warrior's rage,
 That, old in arms, disdain'd the peace of age.
 Then leaning on his hand his watchful head,
 The hoary monarch rais'd his eyes, and said.

 What art thou, speak, that on designs unknown, 90
 While others sleep, thus range the camp alone;
 Seek'st thou some friend, or nightly centinel;
 Stand off, approach not, but thy purpose tell.

v. 92. *Seek'st thou some friend, or nightly centinel?*

It has been thought that Nestor asks this question upon the account of his son Thrasymedes, who commanded the guard that night. He seems to be under some apprehension lest he should have remitted the watch. And it may also be gathered from this passage, that in those times the use of the watch-word was unknown; because Nestor is obliged to croud several questions together, before he can learn whether Agamemnon be a friend or an enemy. The shortness of the questions agrees admirably with the occasion upon which they

O son of Neleus, (thus the king rejoin'd)
 Pride of the Greeks, and glory of thy kind! 95
 Lo here the wretched Agamemnon stands,
 Th' unhappy gen'ral of the Grecian bands;
 Whom Jove decrees with daily cares to bend,
 And woes that only with his life shall end!
 Scarce can my knees these trembling limbs sustain, 100
 And scarce my heart support its load of pain.
 No taste of sleep these heavy eyes have known;
 Confus'd, and sad, I wander thus alone,
 With fears distracted, with no fix'd design;
 And all my people's miseries are mine. 105
 If ought of use thy waking thoughts suggest,
 (Since cares, like mine, deprive thy soul of rest)
 Impart thy counsel, and assist thy friend;
 Now let us jointly to the trench descend,

were made; it being necessary that Nestor should be immediately informed who he was, that passed along the camp: if a spy, that he might stand upon his guard; if a friend, that he might not cause an alarm to be given to the army, by multiplying questions. Eustathius.

v. 96. *Lo here the wretched Agamemnon stands.*] Eustathius observes, that Agamemnon here paints his distress in a very pathetic manner: while the meanest soldier is at rest, the general wanders about disconsolate, and is superior now in nothing so much as in sorrow; but this sorrow proceeds not from a base abject spirit, but from a generous disposition; he is not anxious for the loss of his own glory, but for the sufferings of his people: it is a noble sorrow, and springs from a commendable tenderness and humanity.

At ev'ry gate the fainting guard excite, 110
 Tir'd with the toils of day and watch of night :
 Else may the sudden foe our works invade,
 So near, and favour'd by the gloomy shade.

To him thus Nestor. Trust the pow'rs above,
 Nor think proud Hector's hopes confirm'd by Jove: 115
 How ill agree the views of vain mankind,
 And the wise counsels of th' eternal mind ?
 Audacious Hector, if the Gods ordain
 That great Achilles rise and rage again, }
 What toils attend thee, and what woes remain ? } 120
 Lo faithful Nestor thy command obeys ;
 The care is next our other chiefs to raise :
 Ulysses, Diomed we chiefly need ;
 Meges for strength, Oileus fam'd for speed.
 Some other be dispatch'd, of nimbler feet, } 125
 To those tall ships, remotest of the fleet,
 Where lie great Ajax, and the king of Crete.
 To rouse the Spartan I myself decree ;
 Dear as he is to us, and dear to thee,
 Yet must I tax his sloth, that claims no share 130
 With his great brother in his martial care :
 Him it behov'd to ev'ry chief to sue,
 Preventing ev'ry part perform'd by you ;
 For strong necessity our toils demands,
 Claims all our hearts, and urges all our hands. 135
 To whom the king : With rev'rence we allow
 Thy just rebukes, yet learn to spare them now.

My gen'rous brother is of gentle kind,
 He seems remiss, but bears a valiant mind ;
 Thro' too much def'rence to our sov'reign sway, 140
 Content to follow when we lead the way.

But now, our ills industrious to prevent,
 Long ere the rest, he rose, and fought my tent. .
 The chiefs you nam'd, already, at his call,
 Prepare to meet us at the navy-wall ; 145
 Assembling there, between the trench and gates,
 Near the night-guards, our chosen council waits.

Then none (said Nestor) shall his rule withsta nd,
 For great examples justify command. 150

With that, the venerable warrior rose ;
 The shining greaves his manly legs inclose ;
 His purple mantle golden buckles join'd,
 Warm with the softest wool, and doubly lin'd.

v. 138. *My gen'rous brother is of gentle kind.*] Agamemnon is every where represented as the greatest example of brotherly affection ; and he at all times defends Menelaus, but never with more address than now : Nestor had accused Menelaus of sloth ; the king is his advocate, but pleads his excuse only in part : he does not intirely acquit him, because he would not contradict so wise a man as Nestor ; nor does he condemn him, because his brother at this time was not guilty ; but he very artfully turns the imputation of Nestor to the praise of Menelaus ; and affirms, that what might seem to be remissness in his character, was only a deference to his authority, and that his seeming inactivity was but an unwillingness to act without command. Eustathius.

Then rushing from his tent, he snatch'd in haste
His steely lance, that lighten'd as he past. 155

The camp he travers'd thro' the sleeping croud,
Stopt at Ulysses' tent, and call'd aloud.

Ulysses, sudden as the voice was sent,

Awakes, starts up, and issues from his tent.

What new distress, what sudden cause of fright 160

Thus leads you wand'ring in the silent night ?

O prudent chief ! (the Pylian sage reply'd)

Wise as thou art, be now thy wisdom try'd :

Whatever means of safety can be sought,

Whatever counsels can inspire our thought, 165

Whatever methods, or to fly or fight ;

All, all depend on this important night !

He heard, return'd, and took his painted shield :

Then join'd the chiefs, and follow'd thro' the field.

Without his tent, bold Diomed they found, 170

All sheath'd in arms, his brave companions round ;

Each sunk in sleep, extended on the field,

His head reclining on his bossy shield.

A wood of spears stood by, that fixt upright,

Shot from their flashing points a quiv'ring light. 175

v. 174. *A wood of spears stood by, etc.*] The picture here given us of Diomed sleeping in his arms, with his soldiers about him, and the spears sticking upright in the earth, has a near resemblance to that in the first book of Samuel, ch. 26. v. 7. *Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster ; but Abner and the people lay round about him.*

A bull's black hide compos'd the hero's bed ;
 A splendid carpet roll'd beneath his head.
 Then, with his foot, old Nestor gently shakes
 The slumb'ring chief, and in these words awakes.

Rise, son of Tydeus ! to the brave and strong 180
 Rest seems inglorious, and the night too long.

But sleep'st thou now ? when from yon' hill the foe
 Hangs o'er the fleet, and shades our walls below ?

At this, soft slumber from his eye-lids fled ;
 The warrior saw the hoary chief, and said, 185
 Wond'rous old man ! whose soul no respite knows,
 Tho' years and honours bid thee seek repose.

Let younger Greeks our sleeping warriors wake ;
 Ill fits thy age these toils to undertake.

My friend, (he answer'd) gen'rous is thy care, 190
 These toils, my subjects and my sons might bear,
 Their loyal thoughts and pious loves conspire
 To ease a sov'reign, and relieve a fire.

v. 182. *From yon' hill the foe, etc.*] It is necessary, if we would form an exact idea of the battles of Homer to carry in our minds the place where the action was fought. It will therefore be proper to inquire where that eminence stood, upon which the Trojans encamped this night. Eustathius is inclinable to believe it was Callicolone, (the situation of which you will find in the map of Homer's battles) but it will appear from what Dolon says, v. 487. (of Hector's being encamped at the monument of Ilus) that this eminence must be the Tumulus on which that monument was situate, and so the old scholiast rightly explains it.

But now the last despair surrounds our host ;
 No hour must pass, no moment must be lost ; 195
 Each single Greek, in this conclusive strife,
 Stands on the sharpest edge of death or life :
 Yet if my years thy kind regard engage,
 Employ thy youth as I employ my age ;
 Succeed to these my cares, and rouse the rest ; 200
 He serves me most, who serves his country best.

This said, the hero o'er his shoulders flung
 A lion's spoils, that to his ankles hung ;
 Then seiz'd his pond'rous lance, and strode along.
 Meges the bold, with Ajax fam'd for speed, 205
 The warrior rous'd, and to the intrenchments led.

And now the chiefs approach the nightly guard ;
 A wakeful squadron, each in arms prepar'd :

v. 194. *But now the last despair surrounds our host.*] The different behaviour of Nestor upon the same occasion, to different persons, is worthy observation: Agamemnon was under a concern and dejection of spirit from the danger of his army; to raise his courage, Nestor gave him hopes of success, and represented the state of affairs in the most favourable view. But he applies himself to Diomed, who is at all times enterprising and incapable of despair, in a far different manner: he turns the darkest side to him, and gives the worst prospect of their condition. This conduct (says Eustathius) shews a great deal of prudence: it is the province of wisdom to encourage the disheartened with hopes, and to qualify the forward courage of the daring with fears; that the valour of the one may not sink through despair, nor that of the other fly out into rashness.

v. 207. *Now the chiefs approach the nightly guard.*]

Th' unweary'd watch their list'ning leaders keep,
 And couching close, repel invading sleep. 210
 So faithful dogs their fleecy charge maintain,
 With toil protected from the prowling train;
 When the gaunt lions, with hunger bold,
 Springs from the mountains tow'rd the guarded fold :

It is usual in poetry to pass over little circumstances, and carry on the greater. Menelaus in this book was sent to call some of the leaders : the poet has too much judgment to dwell upon the trivial particulars of his performing this message, but lets us know by the sequel that he had performed it. It would have clogged the poetical narration to have told us how Menelaus waked the heroes to whom he was dispatched, and had been but a repetition of what the poet had fully described before : he therefore (says the same author) drops these particularities, and leaves them to be supplied by the imagination of the reader. It is so in painting, the painter does not always draw at the full length, but leaves what is wanting to be added by the fancy of the beholder.

v. 211. *So faithful dogs, etc.*] This simile is in all its parts just to the description it is meant to illustrate. The dogs represent the watch, the flock the Greeks, the fold their camp, and the wild beast that invades them, Hector. The place, posture, and circumstance, are painted with the utmost life and nature.

Eustathius takes notice of one particular in this description, which shews the manner in which their centinels keep their guard. The poet tells us that they *sate down with their arms in their hands*. I think that this was not so prudent a method as is now used ; it being almost impossible for a man that stands, to drop asleep, whereas one that is seated, may easily be overpowered by the fatigue of a long watch.

Thro' breaking woods her rustling course they hear ; 215
 Loud, and more loud, the clamours strike their ear
 Of hounds and men ; they start, they gaze around,
 Watch ev'ry side, and turn to ev'ry sound.

Thus watch'd the Grecians, cautious of surprize,
 Each voice, each motion drew their ears and eyes ; 220

Each step of passing feet increas'd th' affright ;

And hostile Troy was ever full in fight.

Nestor with joy the wakeful band survey'd,

And thus accosted thro' the gloomy shade.

'Tis well, my sons ! your nightly cares employ, 225

Else must our host become the scorn of Troy.

Watch thus, and Greece shall live—The hero said ;

Then o'er the trench the following chieftains led.

His son, and godlike Merion march'd behind,

(For these the princes to their council join'd) 230

The trenches past, th' assembled kings around

In silent state the consistory crown'd.

v. 228. *Then o'er the trench the following chieftains led.*] The reason why Nestor did not open the council within the trenches, was with a design to encourage the guards, and those whom he intended to send to enter the Trojan camp. It would have appeared unreasonable to send others over the intrenchments upon a hazardous enterprize, and not to have dared himself to set a foot beyond them. This also could not fail of inflaming the courage of the Grecian spies, who would know themselves not to be far from assistance, while so many of the princes were passed over the ditch as well as they. Eustathius.

A place there was yet undefil'd with gore,
 The spot where Hector stopp'd his rage before,
 When night descending, from his vengeful hand, 235
 Repriev'd the relics of the Grecian band :
 (The plain beside with mangled corps was spread,
 And all his progress mark'd by heaps of dead.)
 There sate the mournful kings : when Neleus' son
 The council opening, in these words begun. 240
 Is there (said he) a chief so greatly brave,
 His life to hazard, and his country save ?
 Lives there a man, who singly dares to go
 To yonder camp, or seize some straggling foe ?

v. 241. *Is there (said he) a chief so greatly brave ?*]
 Nestor proposes his design of sending spies into the
 Trojan army with a great deal of address : he begins
 with a general sentence, and will not chuse any one
 hero, for fear of disgusting the rest : had Nestor named
 the person, he would have paid him a complement that
 was sure to be attended with the hazard of his life ; and
 that person might have believed that Nestor exposed
 him to a danger, which his honour would not let him
 decline ; while the rest might have resented such a par-
 tiality, which would have seemed to give the preference
 to another before them. It therefore was wisdom in
 Nestor to propose the design in general terms whereby
 all the gallant men that offered themselves satisfied their
 honour, by being willing to share the danger with
 Diomed ; and it was no disgrace to be left behind, after
 they had offered to hazard their lives for their country.
 Eustathius.

v. 244. *Or seize some straggling foe ?*] It is worthy
 observation with how much caution Nestor opens this
 design, and with how much courage Diomed accepts it.

Or favour'd by the night approach so near, 245
 Their speech, their counsels, and designs to hear?
 If to besiege our navies they prepare,
 Or Troy once more must be the seat of war!
 This could he learn, and to our peers recite,
 And pass unharm'd the dangers of the night; 250
 What fame were his thro' all succeeding days,
 While Phœbus shines, or men have tongues to praise?
 What gifts his grateful country would bestow?
 What must not Greece to her deliv'rer owe?
 A fable ewe each leader should provide, 255
 With each a fable lambkin by her side;
 At ev'ry rite his share should be increas'd,
 And his the foremost honours of the feast.

Fear held them mute: alone, untaught to fear,
 Tydides spoke——The man you seek, is here, 260
 'Thro' yon' black camps to bend my dang'rous way,
 Some God within commands, and I obey.
 But let some other chosen warrior join,
 To raise my hopes, and second my design.
 // By mutual confidence, and mutual aid 265
 // Great deeds are done, and great discov'ries made;

Nestor forms it with coolness, but Diomed embraces it with warmth and resolution. Nestor only proposes that some man would approach the enemy and intercept some straggling Trojan, but Diomed offers to penetrate the very camp. Nestor was afraid lest no one should undertake it: Diomed overlooks the danger, and presents himself, as willing to march against the whole army of Troy. Eustathius.

The wise new prudence from the wife acquire,
And one brave hero fans another's fire.

Contending leaders at the word arose :

Each gen'rous breast with emulation glows : 270

So brave a task each Ajax strove to share,

Bold Merion strove, and Nestor's valiant heir ;

The Spartan wish'd the second place to gain,

And great Ulysses wish'd, nor wish'd in vain.

Then thus the king of men the contest ends : 275

Thou first of warriors, and thou best of friends ;

Undaunted Diomed ! what chief to join

In this great enterprize, is only thine.

Just be thy choice, without affection made,

To birth, or office, no respect be paid : 280

Let worth determine here. The monarch spake,

And inly trembled for his brother's sake.

v. 280. *To birth or office no respect be paid.*] Eustathius remarks, that Agamemnon artfully steals away his brother from danger ; the fondness he bears to him makes him think him unequal to so bold an enterprize, and prefer his safety to his glory. He farther adds, that the poet intended to condemn that faulty modesty which makes one sometimes prefer a nobleman before a person of more real worth. To be greatly born is an happiness, but no merit ; whereas personal virtues shew a man worthy of that greatness to which he is not born.

It appears from hence, how honourable it was of old to go upon these parties by night, or undertake those offices which are now only the task of common soldiers. Gideon in the book of Judges (as Dacier observes) goes as a spy into the camp of Midian, though he was at that time general of the Israelites.

Then thus (the Godlike Diomed rejoin'd)
 My choice declares the impulse of my mind.
 How can I doubt, while great Ulysses stands 285
 To lend his counsels, and assist our hands ?
 A chief, whose safety is Minerva's care ;
 So fam'd, so dreadful, in the works of war :
 Blest in his conduct, I no aid require,
 Wisdom like his might pass thro' flames of fire. 290
 It fits thee not, before these chiefs of fame,
 (Reply'd the sage) to praise me, or to blame ;

v. 289. *Blest in his conduct.*] There required some address in Diomed to make his choice without offending the Grecian princes ; each of them might think it an indignity to be refused such a place of honour. Diomed therefore chuses Ulysses, not because he is braver than the rest, but because he is wiser. This part of his character was allowed by all the leaders of the army ; and none of them thought it a disparagement to themselves as they were men of valour, to see the first place given to Ulysses in point of wisdom. No doubt but the poet, by causing Diomed to make this choice, intended to insinuate that valour ought always to be tempered with wisdom ; to the end that what is designed with prudence may be executed with resolution. Eustathius.

v. 291. *It fits thee not to praise me, or to blame.*] The modesty of Ulysses in this passage is very remarkable ; though undoubtedly he deserved to be praised, yet he interrupts Diomed rather than he would be a hearer of his own commendation. What Diomed spoke in praise of Ulysses, was uttered to justify his choice of him to the leaders of the army ; otherwise the praise he had given him, would have been no better than flattery. Eustathius.

Praise from a friend, or censure from a foe,
Are lost on hearers that our merits know.

But let us haste—Night rolls the hours away, 295

The red'ning orient shews the coming day,
The stars shine fainter on th'ætherial plains,
And of night's empire but a third remains.

Thus having spoke, with gen'rous ardour prest,
In arms terrific their huge limbs they drest. 300

v. 295. — *Night rolls the hours away,*

The stars shine fainter on th'ætherial plains,

And of night's empire but a third remains.]

It has been objected that Ulysses is guilty of a threefold tautology, when every word he uttered shews the necessity of being concise: if the night was nigh spent, there was the less time to lose in tautologies. But this is so far from being a fault, that it is a beauty: Ulysses dwells upon the shortness of the time before the day appears, in order to urge Diomed to the greater speed in prosecuting the design. Eustathius.

v. 298. *But a third remains.]* One ought to take notice with how much exactness Homer proportions his incidents to the time of action: these two books take up no more than the compass of one night; and his design could not have been executed in any other part of it. The poet had before told us, that all the plain was enlightened by the fires of Troy, and consequently no spy could pass over to their camp, until they were almost sunk and extinguished, which could not be until near the morning.

It is observable that the poet divides the night into three parts, from whence we may gather, that the Grecians had three watches during the night: the first and second of which were over, when Diomed and Ulysses set out to enter the enemy's camp. Eustathius.

A two-edg'd faulchion Thrasymed the brave,
 And ample buckler, to Tydides gave :
 Then in a leathern helm he cas'd his head,
 Short of its crest, and with no plume o'erspread :
 (Such as by youths unus'd to arms, are worn; 305
 No spoils enrich it, and no studs adorn.)
 Next him Ulysses took a shining sword,
 A bow and quiver, with bright arrows stor'd :

v. 301. *A two-edg'd faulchion Thrasymed the brave, etc.*] It is a very impertinent remark of Scaliger, that Diomed should not have gone from his tent without a sword. The expedition he now goes upon could not be foreseen by him at the time he rose : he was awaked of a sudden, and sent in haste to call some of the princes : besides, he went but to council, and even then carried his spear with him, as Homer had already informed us. I think if one were to study the art of cavilling, there would be more occasion to blame Virgil for what Scaliger praises him, giving a sword to Euryalus, when he had one before, *Æn.* 9. v. 303.

v. 303. *Then in a leathern helm.*] It may not be improper to observe how conformably to the design the poet arms these two heroes : Ulysses has a bow and arrows, that he might be able to wound the enemy at a distance, and so retard his flight until he could overtake him ; and for fear of a discovery, Diomed is armed with an helmet of leather, that the glittering of it might not betray him. Eustathius.

There is some resemblance in this whole story to that of Nisus and Euryalus in Virgil : and as the heroes are here successful, and in Virgil's unfortunate, it was perhaps as great an instance of Virgil's judgment to describe the unhappy youth in a glittering helmet, which occasioned his discovery, as it was in Homer to arm his successful one in the contrary manner.

A well-prov'd casque with leather braces bound
 (Thy gift, Meriones) his temples crown'd; 310
 Soft wool within; without, in order spread,
 A boar's white teeth grinn'd horrid o'er his head.
 This from Amyntor, rich Ormenus' son,
 Autolychus by fraudulent rapine won,
 And gave Amphidamas; from him the prize 315
 Molus receiv'd, the pledge of social ties;
 The helmet next by Merion was possess'd,
 And now Ulysses' thoughtful temples press'd.
 Thus sheath'd in arms, the council they forsake,
 And dark thro' paths oblique their progress take. 320

v. 309. *A well-prov'd casque.*] Mr. Barnes has a pretty remark on this place, that it was probably from this description, *πίλος ἀγῆρεϊ*, that the ancient painters and tragic poets constantly represented Ulysses with the Pileus on his head; but this particularity could not be preserved with any grace in the translation.

v. 313. *This from Amyntor, etc.*] The succession of this helmet descending from one hero to another, is imitated by Virgil in the story of Nisus and Euryalus.

*Euryalus phaleras Rhamnetis, et aurea bullis
 Cingula; Tiburti Remulo ditissimus olim
 Quæ mittit dona, hospitio cum jungeret absens
 Cædicus; ille suo moriens dat habere nepoti:
 Post mortem bello Rutuli pugnaque potiti.*

It was anciently a custom to make these military presents to brave adventurers. So Jonathan in the first book of Samuel, *stript himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David; and his garments, even to his sword, and his bow, and his girdle.* Ch. 18. v. 4.

Just then, in sign she favour'd their intent,
 A long-wing'd heron great Minerva sent:
 This, tho' surrounding shades obscur'd their view,
 By the shrill clang and whistling wings, they knew.
 As from the right she soar'd, Ulysses pray'd, 325
 Hail'd the glad omen, and address'd the maid.

O daughter of that God, whose arm can wield
 Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield!
 O thou! for ever present in my way,
 Who, all my motions, all my toils survey! 330
 Safe may we pass beneath the gloomy shade,
 Safe by thy succour to our ships convey'd;
 And let some deed this signal night adorn,
 To claim the tears of Trojans yet unborn.
 Then godlike Diomed preferr'd his pray'r: 335
 Daughter of Jove, unconquer'd Pallas! hear.

v. 326. *Ulysses*—*Hail'd the glad omen.*] This passage sufficiently justifies Diomed for his choice of Ulysses; Diomed, who was most renowned for valour, might have given a wrong interpretation to this omen, and so have been discouraged from proceeding in the attempt. For though it really signified, that as the bird was not seen, but only heard by the sound of its wings, so they should not be discovered by the Trojans, but perform actions which all Troy should hear with sorrow; yet on the other hand it might imply, that as they discovered the bird by the noise of its wings, so they should be betrayed by the noise they should make in the Trojan army. The reason why Pallas does not send the bird that is sacred to herself, but the heron, is because it is a bird of prey, and denoted that they should spoil the Trojans. Eustathius.

Great queen of arms, whose favour Tydeus won,
As thou defend'st the fire, defend the son.

When on Æsopus' banks the banded pow'rs
Of Greece he left, and fought the Theban tow'rs, 340
Peace was his charge; receiv'd with peaceful show,

He went a legate, but return'd a foe :

Then help'd by thee, and cover'd by thy shield.

He fought with numbers, and made numbers yield.

So now be present, oh celestial maid ! 345

So still continue to the race thine aid !

A youthful steer shall fall beneath the stroke,

Untam'd, unconscious of the galling yoke,

With ample forehead, and with spreading horns,

Whose taper tops refulgent gold adorns. 350

The heroes pray'd, and Pallas from the skies,

Accords their vow, succeeds their enterprize.

Now, like two lions panting for the prey,

With deathful thoughts they trace the dreary way,

Thro' the black horrors of th' ensanguin'd plain, 355

Thro' dust, thro' blood, o'er arms, and hills of slain.

v. 356. *Thro' dust, thro' blood, etc.*] Xenophon (says Eustathius) has imitated this passage; but what the poet gives us in one line, the historian protracts into several sentences. Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἔληξεν ἡ μάχη, παρῆν ἰδεῖν, τὴν μὲν γῆν αἱματι πεφυρμένην, etc. "*When the battle was over, one might behold through the whole extent of the field, the ground dyed red with blood, the bodies of friends and enemies stretched over each other, the shields pierced, the spears broken, and the drawn swords, some scattered on the earth, some plunged in the bodies of the slain, and some yet grasped in the hands of the soldiers.*"

Nor less bold Hector, and the sons of Troy
 On high designs the wakeful hours employ ;
 Th' assembled peers their lofty chief inclos'd ;
 Who thus the counsels of his breast propos'd. 360

What glorious man, for high attempts prepar'd,
 Dares greatly venture for a rich reward ?
 Of yonder fleet a bold discovery make,
 What watch they keep, and what resolves they take ?
 If now subdu'd they meditate their flight, 365
 And spent with toil neglect the watch of night ?
 His be the chariot that shall please him most,
 Of all the plunder of the vanquish'd host ;
 His the fair steeds that all the rest excell,
 And his the glory to have serv'd so well. 370

v. 357. *Nor less bold Hector, etc.*] It is the remark of Eustathius, that Homer sends out the Trojan spy in this place in a very different manner from the Grecian ones before. Having been very particular in describing the council of the Greeks, he avoids tiring the reader here with parallel circumstances, and passes it in general terms. In the first, a wise old man proposes the adventure with an air of deference ; in the second, a brave young man with an air of authority. The one promises a small gift, but very honourable and certain ; the other a great one, but uncertain and less honourable, because it is given as a reward. So that Diomed and Ulysses are inspired with the love of glory. Dolon is possess'd with a thirst of gain : they proceed with a sage and circumspect valour, he with rashness and vanity ; they go in conjunction, he alone ; they cross the fields out of the road, he follows the common track. In all there is a contraste that is admirable, and a moral that strikes every reader at first sight.

A youth there was among the tribes of Troy,
Dolon his name, Eumedes' only boy.

(Five girls beside the rev'rend herald told)

Rich was the son in brass, and rich in gold ;

Not blest by nature with the charms of face, 375

But swift of foot, and matchless in the race.

v. 372. *Dolon his name.*] It is scarce to be conceived with what conciseness the poet has here given us the name, the fortunes, the pedigree, the office, the shape, the swiftness of Dolon. He seems to have been eminent for nothing so much as for his wealth, though undoubtedly he was by place one of the first rank in Troy: Hector summons him to this assembly amongst the chiefs of Troy: nor was he unknown to the Greeks, for Diomed immediately after he had seized him, calls him by his name. Perhaps being an herald, he had frequently passed between the armies in the execution of his office.

The ancients observed upon this place, that it was the office of Dolon which made him offer himself to Hector. The sacred character gave him hopes that they would not violate his person, should he happen to be taken; and his riches he knew were sufficient to purchase his liberty; besides all which advantages, he had hopes from his swiftness to escape any pursuers. Eustathius.

v. 375. *Not blest by nature with the charms of face.*] The original is,

Ὅς δὴ τοι εἶδος μὲν ἦεν κακός, ἀλλὰ ποδώκης.

Which some ancient critics thought to include a contradiction, because the man who is ill shaped can hardly be swift in running; taking the word εἶδος as applied in general to the air of the whole person. But Aristotle acquaints us that word was as proper in regard to the face only, and that it was usual with the Cretans to call a man with a handsome face, εὐεῖδής. So that Dolon

Hector ! (he said) my courage bids me meet
 This high atchievement, and explore the fleet :
 But first exalt thy sceptre to the skies,
 And swear to grant me the demanded prize ; 380
 Th'immortal courfers, and the glitt'ring car,
 That bear Pelides thro' the ranks of war.

might want a good face, and yet be well shaped enough to make an excellent racer. Poet. c. 26.

v. 380. *Swear to grant me, etc.*] It is evident from this whole narration, that Dolon was a man of no worth or courage ; his covetousness seems to be the sole motive of his undertaking this exploit : and whereas Diomed neither desired any reward, nor when promised required any assurance of it ; Dolon demands an oath, and will not trust the promise of Hector ; he every where discovers a base spirit, and by the sequel it will appear, that this vain boaster instead of discovering the army of the enemy, becomes a traitor to his own. Eustathius.

v. 381. *Th' immortal courfers, and the glitt'ring car.*] Hector in the foregoing speech promises the best horses in the Grecian army, as a reward to any one who would undertake what he proposed. Dolon immediately demands those of Achilles, and confines the general promise of Hector to the particular horses of that brave hero.

There is something very extraordinary in Hector's taking a solemn oath, that he will give the chariot and steeds of Achilles to Dolon. The ancients, says Eustathius, knew not whose vanity most to wonder at, that of Dolon or Hector ; the one for demanding this, or the other for promising it. Though we may take notice, that Virgil liked this extravagance so well as to imitate it, where Ascanius (without being asked) promises the horses and armour of Turnus to Nisus, on his undertaking a like enterprize.

Encourag'd thus no idle scout I go,
 Fulfil thy wish, their whole intention know,
 Ev'n to the royal tent pursue my way, 385
 And all their counsels, all their aims betray.

The chief then heav'd the golden sceptre high,
 Attesting thus the monarch of the sky,
 Be witness thou ! immortal Lord of all !
 Whose thunder shakes the dark aerial hall : 390
 By none but Dolon shall this prize be born,
 And him alone th' immortal steeds adorn.

Thus Hector swore : the Gods were call'd in vain,
 But the rash youth prepares to scour the plain :
 Across his back the bended bow he flung, 395
 A wolf's grey hide around his shoulders hung,
 A ferret's downy fur his helmet lin'd,
 And in his hand a pointed jav'lin shin'd.
 Then (never to return) he fought the shore,
 And trod the path his feet must tread no more. 400
 Scarce had he pass'd the steeds and Trojan throng,
 (Still bending forward as he cours'd along)
 When, on the hollow way, th' approaching tread
 Ulysses mark'd, and thus to Diomed.

*Vidisti, quo Turnus equo, quibus ibat in armis,
 Aureus ; ipsum illum clypeum cristasque rubentes
 Excipiam sorti, jam nunc tua præmia, Nise.*

Unless one should think the rashness of such a promise better agreed with the ardour of this youthful prince, than with the character of an experienced warrior like Hector.

O Friend! I hear some step of hostile feet,
 Moving this way, or hast'ning to the fleet;
 Some spy perhaps, to lurk beside the main;
 Or nightly pillager that strips the slain.
 Yet let him pass, and win a little space;
 Then rush behind him, and prevent his pace.
 But if too swift of foot he flies before,
 Confine his course along the fleet and shore,
 Betwixt the camp and him our spears employ,
 And intercept his hop'd return to Troy.

With that they step'd aside, and stoop'd their head,
 (As Dolon pass'd) behind a heap of dead:
 Along the path the spy unwary flew;
 Soft, at just distance, both the chiefs pursue.
 So distant they, and such the space between,
 As when two teams of mules divide the green,

v. 419. ——— *Such the space between, as when two teams of mules, etc.*] I wonder Eustathius takes no notice of the manner of plowing used by the ancients, which is described in these verses, and of which we have the best account from Dacier. She is not satisfied with the explanation given by Didymus, that Homer meant the space which mules by their swiftness gain upon oxen, that plow in the same field. “ The Grecians (says “ she) did not plow in the manner now in use. They “ first broke up the ground with oxen, and then plowed “ it more lightly with mules. When they employed “ two ploughs in a field, they measured the space they “ could plow in a day, and set their ploughs at the two “ ends of that space, and those ploughs proceeded to- “ ward each other. This intermediate space was con- “ stantly fixed, but less in proportion for two ploughs of

(To whom the hind like shares of land allows)
 When now few furrows part th'approaching ploughs:
 Now Dolon list'ning heard them as they past;
 Hector (he thought) had sent, and check'd his haste;
 'Till scarce at distance of a jav'lin's throw, 425
 No voice succeeding, he perceiv'd the foe.

“ of oxen than for two of mules; because oxen are
 “ slower, and toil more in a field that has not been yet
 “ turned up; whereas mules are naturally swifter, and
 “ make greater speed in a ground that has already had
 “ the first plowing. I therefore believe that what Ho-
 “ mer calls ἐπιστρα, is the space left by the husbandmen
 “ between two ploughs of mules which till the same
 “ field: and as this space was so much the greater in a
 “ field already plowed by oxen, he adds what he says of
 “ mules, that they are swifter and fitter to give the se-
 “ cond plowing than oxen, and therefore distinguishes
 “ the field so plowed by the epithet of *deep*, *μεῖοιο βάθους*.
 “ for that space was certain of so many acres or perches,
 “ and always larger than in a field as yet untilld, which
 “ being heavier and more difficult, required the interval
 “ to be so much the less between two ploughs of oxen,
 “ because they could not dispatch so much work. Ho-
 “ mer could not have served himself of a juster com-
 “ parison for a thing that passed in the fields; at the
 “ same time he shews his experience in the art of a-
 “ griculture, and gives his verses a most agreeable orna-
 “ ment, as indeed all the images drawn from this art are
 “ peculiarly entertaining.”

This manner of measuring a space of ground by a com-
 parison from plowing, seems to have been customary in
 those times, from that passage in the first book of Samu-
 el, ch. 14. v. 14. *And the first slaughter which Jona-*
than and his armour-bearer made, was about twenty
men, within as it were half a furrow of an acre of land,
which a yoke of oxen might plow.

As when two skilful hounds the lev'et wind,
 Or chase thro' woods obscure the trembling hind;
 Now lost, now seen, they intercept his way,
 And from the herd still turn the flying prey: 430
 So fast, and with such fears the Trojan flew;
 So close, so constant, the bold Greeks pursue.
 Now almost on the fleet the dastard falls,
 And mingles with the guards that watch the walls;
 When brave Tydides stopp'd; a gen'rous thought 435
 (Inspir'd by Pallas) in his bosom wrought,
 Lest on the foe some forward Greek advance,
 And snatch the glory from his lifted lance.
 Then thus aloud: Whoe'er thou art, remain;
 This jav'lin else shall fix thee to the plain. 440
 He said, and high in air the weapon cast,
 Which wilful err'd, and o'er his shoulder past;
 Then fix'd in earth. Against the trembling wood
 The wretch stood propp'd, and quiver'd as he stood:
 A sudden palsy seiz'd his turning head; 445
 His loose teeth chatter'd, and his colour fled:

v. 444. *Quiver'd as he stood, etc.*] The poet here gives us a very lively picture of a person in the utmost agonies of fear: Dolon's swiftness forsakes him, and he stands shackled by his cowardice. The very words express the thing he describes by the broken turn of the Greek verses. And something like it is aimed at in the English.

————— ὁ δ' ἄρ' ἔστη, τάρσῃσιν τε
 βαρυσταίναν· ἄρστος δὲ διὰ στόμα γίνετ' ὀδόντων
 ἐκλωπὸς ἱπαιδείας.

The panting warriors seize him as he stands,
And with unmanly tears his life demands.

O spare my youth, and for the breath I owe,
Large gifts of price my father shall bestow : 450
Vast heaps of brass shall in your ships be told,
And steel well-temper'd, and refulgent gold.

To whom Ulysses made this wise reply ;
Whoe'er thou art, be bold, nor fear to die.
What moves thee, say, when sleep has clos'd the sight, 455
To roam the silent fields in dead of night ?
Cam'st thou the secrets of our camp to find,
By Hector prompted, or thy daring mind ?
Or art some wretch by hopes of plunder led,
Thro' heaps of carnage, to despoil the dead ? 460

Then thus pale Dolon with a fearful look,
(Still, as he spoke, his limbs with horror shook)
Hither I came, by Hector's words deceiv'd ;
Much did he promise, rashly I believ'd :
No less a bribe than great Achilles' car, 465
And those swift steeds that sweep the ranks of war,

v. 454. *Be bold, nor fear to die.*] It is observable what caution the poet here uses in reference to Dolon : Ulysses does not make him any promises of life, but only bids him very artfully not to think of dying : so that when Diomed kills him, he was not guilty of a breach of promise, and the spy was deceived rather by the art and subtlety of Ulysses, than by his falshood. Dolon's understanding seems intirely to be disturbed by his fears ; he was so cautious as not to believe a friend just before without an oath, but here he trusts an enemy without so much as a promise. Eustathius.

Urg'd me, unwilling, this attempt to make ;

To learn what counsels, what resolves you take :

If now subdu'd, you fix your hopes on flight,

And tir'd with toils, neglect the watch of night ? 470

Bold was thy aim, and glorious was the prize,

(Ulysses, with a scornful smile, replies)

Far other rulers those proud steeds demand,

And scorn the guidance of a vulgar hand ;

Ev'n great Achilles scarce their rage can tame, 475

Achilles sprung from an immortal dame.

But say, be faithful, and the truth recite !

Where lies encamp'd the Trojan chief to-night ?

Where stand his coursers ? in what quarter sleep

Their other princes ? tell what watch they keep ? 480

Say, since this conquest, what their counsels are ?

Or here to combat, from their city far,

Or back to Ilion's walls transfer the war ?

Ulysses thus, and thus Eumedes' son :

What Dolon knows, his faithful tongue shall own, 485

v. 467. *Urg'd me, unwilling.*] It is observable that the cowardice of Dolon here betrays him into a falsehood : though Eustathius is of opinion that the word in the original means no more than *contrary to my judgment*.

v. 478. *Where lies encamp'd.*] The night was now very far advanced, the morning approached, and the two heroes had their whole design still to execute : Ulysses therefore complies with the necessity of the time, and makes his questions very short, though at the same time very full. In the like manner when Ulysses comes to shew Diomed the chariot of Rhesus, he uses a sudden transition without the usual form of speaking.

Hector, the peers assembling in his tent,
 A council holds at Ilus' monument.
 No certain guards the nightly watch partake ;
 Where'er yon' fires ascend the Trojans wake ;
 Anxious for Troy, the guard the natives keep ; 490
 Safe in their cares, th' auxiliar forces sleep,
 Whose wives and infants, from the danger far,
 Discharge their souls of half the fears of war.

Then sleep those aids among the Trojan train,
 (Inquir'd the chief) or scatter'd o'er the plain ? 495

To whom the spy : Their pow'rs they thus dispose :
 The Pæons, dreadful with their bended bows,
 The Carians, Caucons, the Pelasgian host,
 And Leleges encamp along the coast.

v. 488. *No certain guards.*] Homer to give an air of probability to this narration, lets us understand that the Trojan camp might easily be entered without discovery, because there were no continels to guard it. This might happen partly though the security which their late success had thrown them into, and partly through the fatigues of the former day. Besides which, Homer gives us another very natural reason, the negligence of the auxiliar forces, who being foreigners, had nothing to lose by the fall of Troy.

v. 489. *Where'er yon' fires ascend.*] This is not to be understood of those fires which Hector commanded to be kindled at the beginning of the night, but only of the household fires of the Trojans, distinct from the auxiliars. The expression in the original is somewhat remarkable ; but implies those people that were natives of Troy : *ἰστία* and *ἐχάρα πύρρος* signifying the same thing. So that *ἰστίας ἔχειν* and *ἐχάρας ἔχειν* mean to have houses or hearths in Troy. Eustathius.

Not distant far, lie higher on the land, 500
 The Lycian, Mysian, and Mæonian band,
 And Phrygia's horse, by Thymbras' ancient wall ;
 The Thracians utmost, and a-part from all.
 These Troy but lately to her succour won,
 Led on by Rhesus, great Eioneus' son : 505
 I saw his coursers in proud triumph go,
 Swift as the wind, and white as winter-snow :
 Rich silver plates his shining car infold :
 His solid arms, refulgent, flame with gold ;
 No mortal shoulders suit the glorious load, 510
 Celestial Panoply, to grace a God !
 Let me, unhappy, to your fleet be born,
 Or leave me here, a captive's fate to mourn,
 In cruel chains ; 'till your return reveal
 The truth or falsehood of the news I tell. 515
 To this Tydides, with a gloomy frown :
 Think not to live, tho' all the truth be shown :
 Shall we dismiss thee, in some future strife
 To risk more bravely thy now forfeit life ?
 Or that again our camps thou may'st explore ? 520
 No—once a traitor, thou betray'st no more.

Sternly he spoke, and as the wretch prepar'd
 With humble blandishment to stroke his beard,
 Like lightning swift the wrathful faulchion flew,
 Divides the neck, and cuts the nerves in two ; 525

v. 525. *Divides the neck.*] It may seem a piece of barbarity in Diomed to kill Dolon thus, in the very act of supplicating for mercy. Eustathius answers, that it

One instant snatch'd his trembling soul to hell,
The head, yet speaking, mutter'd as it fell.
The furry helmet from his brow they tear,
The wolf's grey hide, th' unbended bow and spear;
These great Ulysses lifting to the skies, 530
To fav'ring Pallas dedicates the prize.

Great queen of arms ! receive this hostile spoil,
And let the Thracian steeds reward our toil :
Thee first of all the heav'nly host we praise ;
O speed our labours, and direct our ways ! 535
This said, the spoils with dropping gore defac'd,
High on a spreading tamarisk he plac'd ;
Then heap'd with reeds and gather'd boughs the plain,
To guide their footsteps to the place again.

Thro' the still night they cross the devious fields, 540
Slipp'ry with blood, o'er arms and heaps of shields,
Arriving where the Thracian squadrons lay,
And eas'd in sleep the labours of the day,
Rang'd in three lines they view the prostrate band :
The horses yok'd beside each warrior stand ; 545
Their arms in order on the ground reclin'd,
Thro' the brown shade the fulgid weapons shin'd ;
Amidst lay Rhesus, stretch'd in sleep profound,
And the white steeds behind his chariot bound.

was very necessary that it should be so, for fear, if he had deferred his death, he might have cried out to the Trojans, who hearing his voice, would have been upon their guard.

The welcome sight Ulysses first descries, 550
And points to Diomed the tempting prize.
The man, the courfers, and the car behold !
Describ'd by Dolon, with the arms of gold.
Now, brave Tydides ! now thy courage try,
Approach the chariot, and the steeds untye ; 555
Or if thy soul aspire to fiercer deeds,
Urge thou the slaughter, while I seize the steeds.
Pallas (this said) her hero's bosom warms,
Breath'd in his heart, and strung his nervous arms ;
Where'er he pass'd, a purple stream pursu'd ; 560
His thirsty faulchion, fat with hostile blood,
Bath'd all his footsteps, dy'd the fields with gore,
And a low groan remurmur'd thro' the shore.
So the grim lion, from his nightly den,
O'erleaps the fences, and invades the pen ; 565
On sheep or goats, resistless in his way,
He falls, and foaming rends the guardless prey.
Nor stopp'd the fury of his vengeful hand,
'Till twelve lay breathless of the Thracian band.
Ulysses following, as his partner slew, 570
Back by the foot each slaughter'd warrior drew ;
The milk-white courfers studious to convey
Safe to the ships, he wisely clear'd the way ;
Lest the fierce steeds, not yet to battles bred,
Should start, and tremble at the heaps of dead. 575
Now twelve dispatch'd, the monarch last they found ;
Tydides' faulchion fix'd him to the ground.

Just then a deathful dream Minerva sent;
A warlike form appear'd before his tent,
Whose visionary steel his bosom tore : 580
So dream'd the monarch, and awak'd no more.

Ulysses now the snowy steeds detains,
And leads them, fasten'd by the silver reins;
These, with his bow unbent, he lash'd along;
(The scourge forgot, on Rhesus' chariot hung.) 585
Then gave his friend the signal to retire;
But him, new dangers, new achievements fire :
Doubtful he stood, or with his reeking blade
To send more heroes to th' infernal shade,
Drag off the car where Rhesus armour lay, 590
Or heave with manly force, and lift away.
While unresolv'd the son of Tydeus stands,
Pallas appears, and thus her chief commands.

Enough, my son, from farther slaughter cease,
Regard thy safety, and depart in peace ; 595
Haste to the ships, the gotten spoils enjoy,
Nor tempt too far the hostile Gods of Troy.

v. 578. *Just then a deathful dream Minerva sent.*]
All the circumstances of this action, the night, Rhesus buried in a profound sleep, and Dioned with the sword in his hand hanging over the head of that prince, furnished Homer with the idea of this fiction, which represents Rhesus dying fast asleep, and as it were beholding his enemy in a dream plunging a sword into his bosom. This image is very natural, for a man in this condition awakes no farther than to see confusedly what environs him, and to think it not a reality, but a vision. Eustathius, Dacier.

The voice divine confess'd the martial maid ;
 In haste he mounted, and her word obey'd ;
 The coursers fly before Ulysses' bow, 600
 Swift as the wind, and white as winter-snow.

Not unobserv'd they pass'd ; the God of light
 Had watch'd his Troy, and mark'd Minerva's flight,
 Saw Tydeus' son with heav'nly succour blest'd,
 And vengeful anger fill'd his sacred breast. 605
 Swift to the Trojan camp descends the pow'r,
 And wakes Hippocoon in the morning hour,
 (On Rhesus' side accusom'd to attend,
 A faithful kinsman, and instructive friend.)

He rose, and saw the field deform'd with blood, 610
 An empty space where late the coursers stood,
 The yet-warm Thracians panting on the coast ;
 For each he wept, but for his Rhesus most :
 Now while on Rhesus' name he calls in vain,
 The gathering tumult spreads o'er all the plain ; 615
 On heaps the Trojans rush, with wild affright,
 And wond'ring view the slaughters of the night.

Meanwhile the chiefs, arriving at the shade
 Where late the spoils of Hector's spy were laid,
 Ulysses stopp'd ; to him Tydides bore 620
 The trophy, dropping yet with Dolon's gore :
 Then mounts again ; again their nimble feet
 The courser's ply, and thunder tow'rd the fleet.

v. 607. *And wakes Hippocoon.*] Apollo's waking the Trojans is only an allegory to imply that the light of the morning awakened them. Eustathius.

Old Nestor first perceiv'd th' approaching sound,
 Bespeaking thus the Grecian peers around. 625
 Methinks the noise of trampling steeds I hear,
 Thick'ning this way, and gath'ring on my ear ;
 Perhaps some horses of the Trojan breed
 (So may, ye Gods ! my pious hopes succeed)
 The great Tydides and Ulysses bear, 630
 Return'd triumphant with this prize of war.
 Yet much I fear (ah may that fear be vain)
 The chiefs out-number'd by the Trojan train :
 Perhaps, ev'n now pursu'd, they seek the shore ;
 Or oh ! perhaps those heroes are no more. 635
 Scarce had he spoke, when lo ! the chiefs appear,
 And spring to earth ; the Greeks dismiss their fear ,
 With words of friendship and extended hands
 They greet the kings ; and Nestor first demands :

v. 624. *Old Nestor first perceiv'd, etc.*] It may with an appearance of reason be asked, whence it could be that Nestor, whose sense of hearing might be supposed to be impaired by his great age, should be the first person among so many youthful warriors who hears the tread of the horses feet at a distance ! Eustathius answers, that Nestor had a particular concern for the safety of Diomed and Ulysses on this occasion, as he was the person who, by proposing the undertaking, had exposed them to a very signal danger ; and consequently his extraordinary care for their preservation, did more than supply the disadvantage of his age. This agrees very well with what immediately follows ; for the old man breaks out into a transport at the sight of them, and in a wild sort of joy asks some questions, which could not have proceeded from him, but while he was under that happy surprize. Eustathius.

Say thou, whose praises all our host proclaim, 640
 Thou living glory of the Grecian name !
 Say whence these coursers ? by what chance bestow'd,
 The spoil of foes, or present of a God ?
 Not those fair steeds so radiant and so gay,
 That draw the burning chariot of the day. 645
 Old as I am, to age I scorn to yield,
 And daily mingle in the martial field ;
 But sure 'till now no coursers struck my sight
 Like these, conspicuous thro' the ranks of fight.
 Some God, I deem, conferr'd the glorious prize, 650
 Blest as ye are, and fav'rites of the skies ;
 The care of him who bids the thunder roar,
 And * her, whose fury bathes the world with gore.
 Father ! not so, (sage Ithacus rejoin'd)
 The gifts of heav'n are of a nobler kind. 655
 Of Thracian lineage are the steeds ye view,
 Whose hostile king the brave Tydides slew ;
 Sleeping he dy'd, with all his guards around,
 And twelve beside lay gasping on the ground.

* Minerva.

v. 656. *Of Thracian lineage, etc.*] It is observable, says Eustathius, that Homer in this place unravels the series of this night's exploits, and inverts the order of the former narration. This is partly occasioned by a necessity of Nestor's inquiries, and partly to relate the same thing in a different way, that he might not tire the reader with an exact repetition of what he knew before.

v. 659. *And twelve beside, etc.*] How comes it to pass that the poet should here call Dolon the thirteenth that was slain, whereas he had already numbered up
 thirteen

These other spoils from conquer'd Dolon came, 660
 A wretch, whose swiftness was his only fame,
 By Hector sent our forces to explore,
 He now lies headless on the sandy shore.

Then o'er the trench the bounding courfers flew;
 The joyful Greeks with loud acclaim pursue. 665
 Strait to Tydides' high pavilion borne,
 The matchless steeds his ample stall adorn:
 The neighing courfers their new fellows greet,
 And the full racks are heap'd with gen'rous wheat.
 But Dolon's armour, to his ships convey'd, } 670
 High on the painted stern Ulysses laid,
 A trophy destin'd to the blue-ey'd maid. }

Now from nocturnal sweat, and sanguine stain,
 They cleanse their bodies in the neighb'ring main;
 Then in the polish'd bath, refresh'd from toil, 675
 Their joints they supple with dissolving oil,

thirteen besides him? Eustathius answers, that he mentions Rhesus by himself, by way of eminence. Then coming to recount the Thracians, he reckons twelve of them; so that taking Rhesus separately, Dolon will make the thirteenth.

v. 674. *They cleanse their bodies in the main, etc.*] We have here a regimen very agreeable to the simplicity and austerity of the old heroic times. These warriors plunge into the sea to wash themselves; for the salt water is not only more purifying than any other, but more corroborates the nerves. They afterwards enter into a bath, and rub their bodies with oil, which by softening and moistening the flesh prevents too great a dissipation, and restores the natural strength. Eustathius.

In due repast indulge the genial hour,
 And first to Pallas the libations pour:
 They sit, rejoicing in her aid divine,
 And the crown'd goblet foams with floods of wine. 680

v. 677. *In due repast, etc.*] It appears from hence with what preciseness Homer distinguishes the time of these actions. It is evident from this passage, that immediately after their return, it was day-light; that being the time of taking such a repast as is here described.

I cannot conclude the notes to this book without observing, that what seems the principal beauty of it, and what distinguishes it among all the others, is the liveliness of its paintings: the reader sees the most natural night scene in the world; he is led step by step with the adventurers, and made the companion of all their expectations, and uncertainties. We see the very colour of the sky, know the time to a minute, are impatient while the heroes are arming, our imagination steals out after them, becomes privy to all their doubts, and even to the secret wishes of their hearts sent up to Minerva. We are alarmed at the approach of Dolon; hear his very footsteps, assist the two chiefs in pursuing him, and stop just with the spear that arrests him. We are perfectly acquainted with the situation of all the forces, with the figure in which they lie, with the disposition of Rhesus and the Thracians, with the posture of his chariot and horses. The marshy spot of ground where Dolon is killed, the tamarisk, or aquatic plants upon which they hang his spoils, and the reeds that are heaped together to mark the place, are circumstances the most *picturesque* imaginable. And though it must be owned, that the human figures in this piece are excellent, and disposed in the properest actions; I cannot but confess my opinion, that the chief beauty of it is in the prospect, a finer than which was never drawn by any pencil.

T H E
I L I A D.
B O O K XL

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The third battle, and the acts of Agamemnon.

AGAMEMNON having armed himself, leads the Grecians to battle: *Hector* prepares the Trojans to receive them; while *Jupiter*, *Juno*, and *Minerva* give the signals of war. *Agamemnon* bears all before him; and *Hector* is commanded by *Jupiter* (who sends *Iris* for that purpose) to decline the engagement, until the king shall be wounded and retire from the field. He then makes a great slaughter of the enemy; *Ulysses* and *Diomed* put a stop to him for a time; but the latter being wounded by *Paris*, is obliged to desert his companion, who is encompassed by the Trojans, wounded, and in the utmost danger, until *Menelaus* and *Ajax* rescue him. *Hector* comes against *Ajax*, but that hero alone opposes multitudes and rallies the Greeks. In the mean time *Machaon*, in the other wing of the army, is pierced with an arrow by *Paris*, and carried from the fight in *Nestor's* chariot. *Achilles* (who overlooked the action from his ship) sent *Patroclus* to inquire which of the Greeks was wounded in that manner? *Nestor* entertains him in his tent with an account of the accidents of the day, and a long recital of some former wars which he remembered, tending to put *Patroclus* upon persuading *Achilles* to fight for his countrymen, or at least to permit him to do it, clad in A-

chilles's armour. Patroclus in his return meets Eury pylus also wounded, and assists him in that distress. This book opens with the eight and twentieth day of the poem; and the same day, with its various actions and adventures, is extended thro' the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, and part of the eighteenth books. The scene lies in the field near the monument of Ilus.

THE saffron morn, with early blushes spread,
Now rose refulgent from Tithonus' bed;
With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,
And gild the courts of heav'n with sacred light.

As Homer's invention is in nothing more wonderful, than in the great variety of characters with which his poems are diversified, so his judgment appears in nothing more exact, than in that propriety with which each character is maintained. But this exactness must be collected by a diligent attention to his conduct through the whole: and when the particulars of each character are laid together, we shall find them all proceeding from the same temper and disposition of the person. If this observation be neglected, the poet's conduct will lose much of its true beauty and harmony.

I fancy it will not be unpleasant to the reader, to consider the picture of Agamemnon, drawn by so masterly a hand as Homer, in its full length, after having seen him in several views and lights since the beginning of the poem.

He is a master of policy and stratagem, and maintains a good understanding with his council; which was but necessary, considering how many different, independent nations and interests he had to manage: he seems fully conscious of his own superior authority, and always knows the time when to exert it: he is personally very valiant, but not without some mixture of fierceness:

When baleful Eris, sent by Jove's command, 5
The torch of discord blazing in her hand,

highly resentful of the injuries done his family, even more than Menelaus himself: warm both in his passions and affections, particularly in the love he bears his brother. In short, he is (as Homer himself in another place describes him) both a good king, and a great warrior.

Ἀμφοτέρων, βασιλεὺς τ' ἀγαθός, κρατερός τ' αἰχμητής.

It is very observable how this hero rises in the esteem of the reader as the poem advances: it opens with many circumstances very much to the disadvantage of his character; he insults the priest of Apollo, and outrages Achilles: but in the second book he grows sensible of the effects of his rashness, and takes the fault entirely upon himself: in the fourth he shews himself a skilful commander, by exhorting, reproving, and performing all the offices of a good general: in the eighth he is deeply touched by the sufferings of his army, and makes all the peoples calamities his own: in the ninth he endeavours to reconcile himself to Achilles, and condescends to be the petitioner, because it is for the public good: in the tenth finding those endeavours ineffectual, his concern keeps him the whole night awake, in contriving all possible methods to assist them: and now in the eleventh as it were resolving himself to supply the want of Achilles, he grows prodigiously in his valour, and performs wonders in his single person.

Thus we see Agamemnon continually winning upon our esteem, as we grow acquainted with him: so that he seems to be like that goddess the poet describes, who was low at the first, but rising by degrees, at last reaches the very heavens.

v. 5. *When baleful Eris, etc.*] With what a wonderful sublimity does the poet begin this book! he awakens the reader's curiosity, and sounds an alarm to

Thro' the red skies her bloody sign extends,
 And wrapt in tempests, o'er the fleet descends.
 High on Ulysses' bark, her horrid stand
 She took, and thunder'd thro' the seas and land. 10
 Ev'n Ajax and Achilles heard the sound,
 Whose ships, remote, the guarded navy bound.
 Thence the black fury thro' the Grecian throng:
 With horror sounds the loud Orthian song:
 The navy shakes, and at the dire alarms 15
 Each bosom boils, each warrior starts to arms.
 No more they sigh, inglorious to return,
 But breathe revenge, and for the combat burn.

the approaching battle. With what magnificence does he usher in the deeds of Agamemnon! He seems for a while to have lost all view of the main battle, and lets the whole action of the poem stand still, to attend the motions of this single hero. Instead of a herald, he brings down a goddess to inflame the army; instead of a trumpet, or such warlike music, Juno and Minerva thunder over the field of battle: Jove rains down drops of blood, and averts his eyes from such a scene of horrors.

By the goddess Eris is meant that ardour and impatience for the battle which now inspired the Grecian army: they who just before were almost in despair, now burn for the fight, and breathe nothing but war. Eustathius.

v. 14. *Orthian song.*] This is a kind of an Odaic song, invented and sung on purpose to fire the soul to noble deeds in war. Such was that of Timotheus before Alexander the Great, which had such an influence upon him, that he leaped from his seat, and laid hold on his arms. Eustathius.

The king of men his hardy host inspires
With loud command, with great example fires; 20
Himself first rose, himself before the rest
His mighty limbs in radiant armour drest.
And first he cas'd his manly legs around
In shining greaves, with silver buckles bound:
The beaming cuirass next adorn'd his breast, 25
The same which once king Cinyras possess'd:
(The fame of Greece and her assembled host
Had reach'd that monarch on the Cyprian coast;
'Twas then the friendship of the chief to gain,
This glorious gift he sent, nor sent in vain.) 30
Ten rows of azure steel the work infold,
Twice ten of tin, and twelve of ductile gold;
Three glitt'ring dragons to the gorget rise,
Whose imitated scales against the skies
Reflected various light, and arching bow'd, 35
Like colour'd rainbows o'er a show'ry cloud:
(Jove's wondrous bow, of three celestial dies,
Plac'd as a sign to man amid the skies.)

v. 26. *King Cinyras.*] It is probable this passage of Cinyras, king of Cyprus, alludes to a true history; and what makes it the more so, is, that this island was famous for its mines of several metals. Eustathius.

v. 35. *Arching bow'd, etc.*] Eustathius observes, that the poet intended to represent the bending figure of these serpents as well as their colour, by comparing them to rainbows. Dacier observes here how close a parallel this passage of Homer bears to that in Genesis, where God tells Noah, *I have set my bow in the clouds, that it may be for a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.*

A radiant baldric o'er his shoulder ty'd,
 Sustain'd the sword that glitter'd at his side : 40
 Gold was the hilt, a silver sheath encas'd
 The shining blade, and golden hangers grac'd.
 His buckler's mighty orb was next display'd,
 That round the warrior cast a dreadful shade ;
 Ten zones of brass its ample brim surround, 45
 And twice ten bosses the bright convex crown'd :
 Tremendous Gorgon frown'd upon its field,
 And circling terrors fill'd th' expressive shield :
 Within its concave hung a silver thong,
 On which a minnie serpent creeps along, 50
 His azure length in easy waves extends,
 'Till in three heads th' embroider'd monster ends..
 Last o'er his brows his fourfold helm he plac'd,
 With nodding horse-hair formidably grac'd ;
 And in his hands two steely jav'lines wield, 55
 That blaze to heav'n, and lighten all the fields.

That instant Juno, and the martial maid.
 In happy thunders promis'd Greece their aid ;
 High o'er the chief they clafh'd their arms in air,
 And leaning from the clouds, expect the war. 60

Close to the limits of the trench and mound,
 The fiery courfers to their chariots bound
 The squires restrain'd : The foot, with those who wield
 The lighter arms, rush forward to the field.

v. 63. *The foot, with those who wield the lighter arms, rush forward.*] Here we see the order of battle is inverted, and opposite to that which Nestor proposed in

To second these, in close array combin'd, 65

The squadrons spread their sable wings behind.

Now shouts and tumults wake the tardy sun,

As with the light the warriors toils begun.

Ev'n Jove, whose thunder spoke his wrath, distill'd

Red drops of blood o'er all the fatal field ; 70

The woes of men unwilling to survey,

And all the slaughters that must stain the day.

Near Ilus' tomb in order rang'd around,

The Trojan lines possess'd the rising ground,

There wise Polydamas and Hector stood ; 75

Æneas, honour'd as a guardian God ;

Bold Polybus, Agenor the divine ;

The brother warriors of Antenor's line ;

the fourth book : for it is the cavalry which is there sustained by the infantry ; here the infantry by the cavalry. But to deliver my opinion, I believe it was the nearness of the enemy that obliged Agamemnon to change the disposition of the battle : he would break their battalions with his infantry, and compleat their defeat by his cavalry, which should fall upon the flyers. Dacier.

v. 70. *Red drops of blood.*] These prodigies, with which Homer embellishes his poetry, are the same with those which history relates not as ornaments, but as truths. Nothing is more common in history than showers of blood, and philosophy gives us the reason of them : the two battles which had been fought on the plains of Troy, had so drenched them with blood, that a great quantity of it might be exhaled in vapours, and carried into the air, and being there condensed, fall down again in dews and drops of the same colour. Eustathius. See notes on *lib.* 16. v. 560.

With youthful Acamas, whose beauteous face,
 And fair proportion, match'd th' etherial race; 80
 Great Hector, cover'd with his spacious shield,
 Plies all the troops, and orders all the field.
 As the red star now shows his sanguine fires
 Thro' the dark clouds, and now in night retires;
 Thus thro' the ranks appear'd the godlike man, 85
 Plung'd in the rear, or blazing in the van;
 While streamy sparkles, restless as he flies,
 Flash from his arms as light'ning from the skies.
 As sweating reapers in some wealthy field,
 Rang'd in two bands, their crooked weapons wield, 90

v. 83. *As the red star.*] We have just seen at full length the picture of the general of the Greeks: here we see Hector beautifully drawn in miniature. This proceeded from the great judgment of the poet: it was necessary to speak fully of Agamemnon, who was to be the chief hero of this battle, and briefly of Hector, who had been so often spoken of at large before. This is an instance that the poet well knew when to be concise, and when to be copious. It is impossible that any thing should be more happily imagined, than this similitude: it is so lively, that we see Hector sometimes shining in arms at the head of his troops; and then immediately lose sight of him, while he retires in the ranks of the army. Eustathius.

v. 89. *As sweating reapers.*] It will be necessary for the understanding of this similitude, to explain the method of mowing in Homer's days! they mowed in the same manner as they plowed, beginning at the extremes of the field, which was equally divided, and proceeded until they met in the middle of it. By this means they raised an emulation between both parties, which should

Bear down the furrows, 'till their labours meet;
 Thick fall the heapy harvests at their feet.
 So Greece and Troy the field of war divide,
 And falling ranks are strow'd on ev'ry side.
 None stoop'd a thought to base inglorious flight; 95
 But horse to horse, and man to man they fight.
 Not rabid wolves more fierce contest their prey;
 Each wounds, each bleeds, but none resign the day.
 Discord with joy the scene of death descries,
 And drinks large slaughter at her sanguine eyes: 100
 Discord alone, of all th' immortal train,
 Swells the red horrors of this direful plain:
 The Gods in peace their golden mansions fill,
 Rang'd in bright order on th' Olympian hill;
 But gen'ral murmurs told their griefs above, 105
 And each accus'd the partial will of Jove.
 Meanwhile apart, superior, and alone,
 Th' eternal monarch, on his awful throne,
 Wrapt in the blaze of boundless glory sat;
 And fix'd, fulfill'd the just decrees of fate. 110
 On earth he turn'd his all-confid'ring eyes,
 And mark'd the spot where Ilion's tow'rs arise;
 The sea with ships, the fields with armies spread,
 The victor's rage, the dying, and the dead.

finish their share first. If we consider this custom, we shall
 find it a very happy comparison to the two armies advanc-
 ing against each other, together with an exact resem-
 blance in every circumstance the poet intended to illus-
 trate.

Thus while the morning beams increas'ing bright 115
 O'er heav'n's pure azure spread the growing light,
 Commutual death the fate of war confounds,
 Each adverse battle goar'd with equal wounds.
 But now (what time in some sequester'd vale
 The weary woodman spreads his sparing meal, 120

v. 119. *What time in some sequester'd vale the weary woodman, etc.*] One may gather from hence, that in Homer's time they did not measure the day by hours, but by the progression of the sun; and distinguished the parts of it by the most noted employments; as in the 12th of the Odyssæis, v. 439. from the rising of the judges, and here from the dining of the labourer.

It may perhaps be entertaining to the reader to see a general account of the mensuration of time among the ancients, which I shall take from Spondanus. At the beginning of the world it is certain there was no distinction of time but by the light and darkness, and the whole day was included in the general terms of the evening and the morning. Munster makes a pretty observation upon this custom: our long-lived forefathers (says he) had not so much occasion to be exact observers how the day passed, as their frailer sons, whose shortness of life makes it necessary to distinguish every part of time, and suffer none of it to slip away without their observation.

It is not improbable but that the Chaldeans, many ages after the flood, were the first who divided the day into hours; they being the first who applied themselves with any success to astrology. The most ancient funeral we read of, is that of Achaz, mentioned in the second book of kings, ch. 20. about the time of the building of Rome: but as these were of no use in clouded days, and in the night, there was another invention of measuring the parts of time by water: but that not being

When his tir'd arms refuse the axe to rear,
And claim a respite from the sylvan war ;

being sufficiently exact, they laid it aside for another by
stand.

It is certain the use of dials was earlier among the
Greeks than the Romans ; it was above three hundred
years after the building of Rome before they knew any
thing of them : but yet they had divided the day and
night into twenty-four hours, as appears from Varro
and Macrobius, though they did not count the hours as
we do, numerically, but from midnight to midnight, and
distinguished them by particular names, as by the cock-
crowing, the dawn, the mid-day, *etc.* The first sun-
dial we read of among the Romans which divided the
day into hours, is mentioned by Pliny, *lib. 1. cap. 20.*
fixed upon the temple of Quirinus by L. Papyrius the
censor, about the twelfth year of the wars with Pyrrhus.
But the first that was of any use to the public, was set
up near the *rostra* in the *forum* by Valerius Messala the
consul, after the taking of Catana in Sicily ; from whence
it was brought, thirty years after the first had been set
up by Papyrius : but this was still an imperfect one, the
lines of it not exactly corresponding with the several
hours. Yet they made use of it many years, until Q.
Marcius Philippus placed another by it, greatly improv-
ed : but these had still one common defect of being use-
less in the night, and when the skies were overcast. All
these inventions being thus ineffectual, Scipio Nasica
some years after measured the day and night into hours
from the dropping of water.

Yet near this time, it may be gathered that sun-dials
were very frequent in Rome, from a fragment preserved
by Aulus Gellius, and ascribed to Plautus : the lines are
so beautiful, that I cannot deny the reader the satisfaction
of seeing them. They are supposed to be spoken by a
hungry parasite, upon a sight of one of these dials.

But not 'till half the prostrate forests lay
 Stretch'd in long ruin, and expos'd to day)
 Then, nor 'till then, the Greeks impulsive might 125
 Pierc'd the black phalanx, and let in the light.
 Great Agamemnon then the slaughter led,
 And slew Bienor at his people's head :
 Whose squire Oileus, with a sudden spring,
 Leap'd from his chariot to revenge the king, 130

*Ut illum dii perdant, primus qui horas repperit,
 Quique adeo primus statuit heic solarium :
 Qui mihi comminuit misero, articulatim, diem !
 Nam me puero uterus hic erat solarium,
 Multo omnium istorum optimum et verissimum,
 Ubi iste monebat esse, nisi cum nihil erat.
 Nunc etiam quod est, non est, nisi Soli lubet :
 Itaque adeo jam oppletum est oppidum solariis,
 Major pars populi aridi reptant fame.*

We find frequent mention of the hours in the course of this poem ; but to prevent any mistake, it may not be improper to take notice, that they must always be understood to mean the seasons, and not the division of the day by hours.

v. 125 *The Greeks impulsive might.*] We had just before seen that all the Gods were withdrawn from the battle ; that Jupiter was resolved, even against the inclinations of them all, to honour the Trojans. Yet we here see the Greeks breaking through them ; the love the poet bears to his countrymen makes him aggrandize their valour, and over-rule even the decrees of fate. To vary his battles, he supposes the Gods to be absent this day ; and they are no sooner gone, but the courage of the Greeks prevails, even against the determination of Jupiter. Eustathius.

But in his front he felt the fatal wound,
 Which pierc'd his brain, and stretch'd him on the ground.
 Atrides spoil'd, and left them on the plain :
 Vain was their youth, their glitt'ring armour vain :
 Now foil'd with dust, and naked to the sky, 135
 Their snowy limbs and beauteous bodies lie.

Two sons of Priam next to battle move,
 The product one of marriage, one of love ;
 In the same car the brother warriors ride,
 This took the charge to combat, that to guide ; 140
 Far other task ! than when they went to keep.
 On Ida's tops, their father's fleecy sheep.
 These on the mountains once Achilles found.
 And captive led, with pliant osiers bound ;

v. 135. *Naked to the sky.*] Eustathius refines upon this place, and believes that Homer intended, by particularizing the whiteness of the limbs, to ridicule the effeminate education of these unhappy youths. But as such an interpretation may be thought below the majesty of an epic poem, and a kind of barbarity to insult the unfortunate, I thought it better to give the passage an air of compassion. As the words are equally capable of either meaning, I imagined the reader would be more pleased with the humanity of the one, than with the satire of the other.

v. 143. *These on the mountains once Achilles found.*] Homer, says Eustathius, never lets any opportunity pass of mentioning the hero of his poem, Achilles : he gives here an instance of his former resentment, and at once varies his poetry, and exalts his character. Nor does he mention him cursorily ; he seems unwilling to leave him ; and when he pursues the thread of the story in a few lines, takes occasion to speak again of him. This

Then to their fire for ample fums restor'd ; 145
But now to perish by Atrides' sword :
Pierc'd in the breast the base-born Ifus bleeds :
Cleft thro' the head, his brother's fate succeeds.
Swift to the spoil the hasty victor falls,
And stript, their features to his mind recalls. 150
The Trojans see the youths untimely die,
But helpless tremble for themselves, and fly.
So when a lion, ranging o'er the lawns,
Finds, on some grassy lare, the couching fawns,
'Their bones he cracks, their reeking vitals draws, 155
And grinds the quiv'ring flesh with bloody jaws ;
'The frightened hind beholds, and dares not stay,
But swift thro' rustling thickets bursts her way ;
'All drown'd in sweat the panting mother flies,
And the big tears roll trickling from her eyes. 160
Amidst the tumult of the routed train,
'The sons of false Antimachus were slain ;
He, who for bribes his faithless counsels sold,
And voted Helen's stay for Paris' gold.
Atrides mark'd as these their safety sought, 165
And slew the children for the father's fault ;
'Their headstrong horse unable to restrain,
'They shook with fear, and dropp'd the silken rein ;

is a very artful conduct ; by mentioning him so frequently, he takes care that the reader should not forget him, and shews the importance of that hero, whose anger is the subject of his poem.

Then in their chariot on their knees they fall,
And thus with lifted hands for mercy call. 170

Oh spare our youth, and for the life we owe
Antimachus shall copious gifts bestow ;
Soon as he hears, that not in battle slain,
The Grecian ships his captive sons detain,
Large heaps of brags in ransom shall be told, 175
And steel well-temper'd, and persuasive gold.

These words, attended with a flood of tears,
The youths address'd to unrelenting ears :
The vengeful monarch gave this stern reply ;
If from Antimachus ye spring, ye die : 180
The daring wretch who once in council stood
To shed Ulysses' and my brother's blood,
For proffer'd peace ! and sues his seed for grace !
No, die, and pay the forfeit of your race.

This said, Pisander from the car he cast, 185
And pierc'd his breast : supine he breath'd his last,
His brother leap'd to earth ; but as he lay,
'The trenchant-faulchion lopp'd his hands away ;

v. 181. *Antimachus, who once, etc.*] It is observable that Homer with a great deal of art interweaves the true history of the Trojan war in his poem; he here gives a circumstance that carries us back from the tenth year of the war to the very beginning of it. So that although the action of the poem takes up but a small part of the last year of the war, yet by such incidents as these we are taught a great many particulars that happened through the whole series of it. Eustathius.

v. 188. *Lopp'd his hands away.*] I think one cannot but compassionate the fate of these brothers, who suffer

His fever'd head was tofs'd among the throng,
 And rolling, drew a bloody trail along. 190
 Then where the thickest fought the victor flew ;
 The king's example all his Greeks pursue.
 Now by the foot the flying foot were slain,
 Horse trod by horse, lay foaming on the plain.
 From the dry fields thick clouds of dust arise, 195
 Shade the black host, and intercept the skies.
 The brass-hoof'd steeds tumultuous plunge and bound,
 And the thick thunder beats the lab'ring ground.

for the sins of their father, notwithstanding the justice which the commentators find in this action of Agamemnon. And I can much less imagine that his cutting off their *hands* was meant for an express example against bribery, in revenge for the gold which Antimachus had received from Paris. Eustathius is very refining upon this point ; but the grave Spondanus outdoes them all, who has found there was an excellent conceit in cutting off the hands and head of the son ; the first, because the father had been for *laying hands* on the Grecian ambassadors ; and the second, because it was from his *head* that the advice proceeded of detaining Helena.

v. 193. *Now by the foot the flying foot*, etc.] After Homer with a poetical justice has punished the sons of Antimachus for the crimes of the father ; he carries on the narration, and presents all the terrors of the battle to our view : we see in the lively description the men and chariots overthrown, and hear the trampling of the horses feet. Thus the poet very artfully, by such sudden alarms, awakens the attention of the reader, that is apt to be tired and grow remiss by a plain and more cool narration.

v. 197. *The brass hoof'd steeds*.] Eustathius observes that the custom of shoeing horses was in use in Homer's

Still slaught'ring on, the king of men proceeds ;
The distanc'd army wonders at his deeds. 200

As when the winds with raging flames conspire,
And o'er the forests roll the flood of fire,
In blazing heaps the grove's old honours fall,
And one refulgent ruin levels all.
Before Atrides' rage so sinks the foe, 205

Whole squadrons vanish, and proud heads lie low.
The steeds fly trembling from his waving sword ;
And many a car, now lighted of its lord,
Wide o'er the field with guideless fury rolls,
Breaking their ranks, and crushing out their souls ; 210
While his keen faulchion drinks the warriors lives ;
More grateful, now, to vultures than their wives !

time, and calls the shoes *σεληνώϊα*, from the figure of a half-moon.

v. 212. *More grateful, now, to vultures than their wives.*] This is a reflection of the poet, and such a one as arises from a sentiment of compassion ; and indeed there is nothing more moving than to see those heroes, who were the love and delight of their spouses, reduced suddenly to such a condition of horror, that those very wives durst not look upon them. I was very much surprised to find a remark of Eustathius upon this, which seems very wrong and unjust : he would have it that there is in this place an ellipsis, which comprehends a severe raillery : “ For, says he, Homer would imply, “ that those dead warriors were now more agreeable to “ vultures, than they had ever been in all their days to “ their wives.” This is very ridiculous ; to suppose that these unhappy women did not love their husbands, is to insult them barbarously in their affliction ; and every body can see that such a thought in this place

Perhaps great Hector then had found his fate,
 But Jove and destiny prolong'd his date.
 Safe from the darts, the care of heav'n he stood, 215
 Amidst alarms, and death, and dust, and blood.

Now past the tomb where ancient Ilus lay,
 Thro' the mid field the routed urge their way.
 Where the wild figs th' adjoining summit crown,
 That path they take, and speed to reach the town 220
 As swift Atrides with loud shouts pursu'd,
 Hot with his toil, and bath'd in hostile blood.
 Now near the beech-tree, and the Scæan gates,
 The hero halts, and his associates waits.
 Meanwhile on ev'ry side, around the plain, 225
 Dispers'd, disorder'd, fly the Trojan train.
 So flies a herd of beeves, that hear dismay'd
 The lion's roaring thro' the midnight shade;
 On heaps they tumble with successless haste;
 The savage seizes, draws, and rends the last: 230

would have appeared mean, frigid, and out of season. Homer, on the contrary, always endeavours to excite compassion by the grief of the wives, whose husbands are killed in the battle. Dacier.

v. 217. *Now past the tomb where ancient Ilus lay.*] By the exactness of Homer's description we see as in a landscape the very place where this battle was fought. Agamemnon drives the Trojans from the tomb of Ilus, where they encamped all the night; that tomb stood in the middle of the plain: from thence he pursues them by the wild fig-tree to the beech-tree, and from thence to the very Scæan gate. Thus the scene of action is fixed, and we see the very rout through which the one retreats, and the other advances. Eustathius.

Not with less fury stern Atrides flew,
 Still press'd the rout, and still the hindmost flew;
 Hurl'd from their cars the bravest chiefs are kill'd,
 And rage and death, and carnage, load the field.

Now storms the victor at the Trojan wall; 235
 Surveys the tow'rs, and meditates their fall.

But Jove descending shook th'Idæan hills,
 And down their summits pour'd a hundred rills!
 Th'unkindled lightning in his hand he took,
 And thus the many-colour'd maid bespoke. 240

Iris, with haste thy golden wings display,
 To godlike Hector this our word convey.
 While Agamemnon wastes the ranks around,
 Fights in the front, and bathes with blood the ground,
 Bid him give way; but issue forth commands, 245
 And trust the war to less important hands:

v. 241. *Iris, with haste thy golden wings display.*] It is evident that some such contrivance as this was necessary; the Trojans, we learn from the beginning of this book, were to be victorious this day; but if Jupiter had not now interposed, they had been driven even within the walls of Troy. By this means also the poet consults both for the honour of Hector, and that of Agamemnon. Agamemnon has time enough to shew the greatness of his valour, and it is no disgrace to Hector not to encounter him when Jupiter interposes.

Eustathius observes, that the poet gives us here a sketch of what is drawn out at large in the story of this whole book: this he does to raise the curiosity of the reader, and make him impatient to hear those great actions, which must be performed before Agamemnon can retire, and Hector be victorious.

But when, or wounded by the spear, or dart,
That chief shall mount his chariot, and depart :
Then Jove shall string his arm, and fire his breast,
Then to her ships shall flying Greece be press'd, 250
'Till to the main the burning sun descend,
And sacred night her awful shade extend.

He spoke, and Iris at his word obey'd ;
On wings of winds descends the various maid.
The chief she found amidst the ranks of war, 255
Close to the bulwarks, on his glitt'ring car.
The Goddess then : O son of Priam, hear !
From Jove I come, and his high mandate bear.
While Agamemnon wastes the ranks around,
Fights in the front, and bathes with blood the ground, 260
Abstain from fight : yet issue forth commands,
And trust the war to less important hands.
But when, or wounded by the spear, or dart.
The chief shall mount his chariot, and depart :
Then Jove shall string thy arm, and fire thy breast, 265
Then to her ships shall flying Greece be press'd,
'Till to the main the burning sun descend,
And sacred night her awful shade extend.

She said, and vanish'd : Hector, with a bound,
Springs from his chariot on the trembling ground, 270
In clanging arms : he grasps in either hand
A pointed lance, and speeds from band to band ;
Revives their ardour, turns their steps from flight,
And wakes anew the dying flames of fight.

They stand to arms : the Greeks their onset dare, 275
Condense their pow'rs, and wait the coming war.

New force, new spirit to each breast returns :

The fight renew'd with fiercer fury burns :

The king leads on ; all fix on him their eye,

And learn from him, to conquer, or to die. 280

Ye sacred nine, celestial muses ! tell,

Who fac'd him first, and by his prowess fell ?

The great Iphidamas, the bold and young :

From sage Antenor and Theano sprung ;

Whom from his youth his grandfire Cisseus bred, 285

And nurs'd in Thrace where snowy flocks are fed.

v. 281. *Ye sacred nine.*] The poet, to win the attention of the reader, and seeming himself to be struck with the exploits of Agamemnon while he recites them (who when the battle was rekindled, rushes out to engage his enemies) invokes not one muse, as he did in the beginning of the poem, but as if he intended to warn us that he was about to relate something surprizing, he invokes the whole nine ; and then, as if he had received their inspiration, goes on to deliver what they suggested to him. By means of this apostrophe, the imagination of the reader is so filled, that he seems not only present, but active in the scene to which the skill of the poet has transported him. Eustathius.

v. 283. *Iphidamas, the bold and young.*] Homer here gives us the history of this Iphidamas, his parentage, the place of his birth, and many circumstances of his private life. This he does to diversify his poetry, and to soften with some amiable embellishments, the continual horrors that must of necessity strike the imagination, in an uninterrupted narration of blood and slaughter. Eustathius.

Scarce did the down his rosy cheeks invest,
 And early honour warm his gen'rous breast,
 When the kind fire consign'd his daughter's charms
 (Theano's sister) to his youthful arms. 290
 But call'd by glory to the wars of Troy,
 He leaves untasted the first fruits of joy ;
 From his lov'd bride departs with melting eyes,
 And swift to aid his dearer country flies.
 With twelve black ships he reach'd Percope's strand, 295
 Thence took the long, laborious march by land.
 Now fierce for fame, before the ranks he springs,
 Towing in arms, and braves the king of kings.
 Atrides first discharg'd the missive spear ;
 The Trojan stoop'd, the jav'lin pass'd in air. 300
 Then near the corselet, at the monarch's heart,
 With all his strength the youth directs his dart :
 But the broad belt, with plates of silver bound,
 The point rebated, and repell'd the wound.
 Incumber'd with the dart, Atrides stands 305
 Till grasp'd with force, he wrench'd it from his hands,
 At once his weighty sword discharg'd a wound
 Full on his neck, that fell'd him to the ground.

v. 290. *Theano's sister.*] That the reader may not be shocked at the marriage of Iphidamas with his mother's sister, it may not be amiss to observe from Eustathius, that consanguinity was no impediment in Greece in the days of Homer: nor is Iphidamas singular in this kind of marriage, for Diomed was married to his own aunt as well as he.

Stretch'd

Stretch'd in the dust th' unhappy warrior lies,
And sleep eternal seals his swimming eyes. 310

Oh worthy better fate ! oh early slain !
Thy country's friend ; and virtuous, tho' in vain !

No more the youth shall join his consort's side,
At once a virgin, and at once a bride !

No more with presents her embraces meet, 315

Or lay the spoils of conquest at her feet,
On whom his passion, lavish of his store,
Bestow'd so much, and vainly promis'd more !

Unwept, uncover'd on the plain he lay,
While the proud victor bore his arms away. 320

Coon, Antenor's eldest hope, was nigh :
Tears, at the sight, came starting from his eye,
While pierc'd with grief the much-lov'd youth he view'd,
And the pale features now deform'd with blood.

Then with his spear, unseen, his time he took, 325
Aim'd at the king, and near his elbow strook.

The thrilling steel transpierc'd the brawny part,
And thro' his arm stood forth the barbed dart.

Surpriz'd the monarch feels, yet void of fear
On Coon rushes with his lifted spear : 330

His brother's corps the pious Trojan draws,
And calls his country to assert his cause,
Defends him breathless on the sanguine field,
And o'er the body spreads his ample shield,
Atrides, marking an unguarded part, 335

Transfix'd the warrior with his brazen dart ;

Prone on his brother's bleeding breast he lay,
 The monarch's faulchion lopp'd his head away :
 The social shades the same dark journey go,
 And join each other in the realms below.

340

The vengeful victor rages round the fields,
 With ev'ry weapon, art or fury yields :
 By the long lance, the sword, or pond'rous stone,
 Whole ranks are broken, and whole troops o'erthrown.
 This, while yet warm, distill'd the purple flood, 345
 But when the wound grew stiff with clotted blood,
 Then grinding tortures his strong bosom rend,
 Less keen those darts the fierce Ilythiæ send,
 (The pow'rs that cause the teeming matron's throes, 350
 Sad mothers of unutterable woes!)
 Stung with the smart, all panting with the pain,
 He mounts the car, and gives his squire the rein:

v. 349. *The fierce Ilythiæ.*] These Ilythiæ are the goddesses that Homer supposes to preside over child-birth; he arms their hands with a kind of instrument, from which a pointed dart is shot into the distressed mother, as an arrow from a bow: so that as Eris has her torch, and Jupiter his thunder, these goddesses have their darts, which they shoot into women in travail. He calls them the daughters of Juno, because she presides over the marriage-bed. Eustathius. Here (says Dacier) we find the style of the holy scripture, which to express a severe pain, usually compares it to that of women in labour. Thus David, *Pain came upon them as upon a woman in travail*; and Isaiah, *They shall grieve as a woman in travail*. And all the prophets are full of the like expressions.

Then with a voice which fury made more strong,
And pain augmented, thus exhorts the throng. 355

O friends ! O Greeks ! assert your honours won ;
Proceed, and finish what this arm begun :
Lo ! angry Jove forbids your chief to stay,
And envies half the glories of the day.

He said ; the driver whirls his lengthful thong ; 360
The horses fly ! the chariot smokes along.

Clouds from their nostrils the fierce coursers blow,
And from their sides the foam descends in snow ;

Shot thro' the battle in a moment's space,
The wounded monarch at his tent they place. 365

No sooner Hector saw the king retir'd,
But thus his Trojans and his aids he fir'd ;

Hear all ye Dardan, all ye Lycian race !
Fam'd in close fight, and dreadful face to face.

Now call to mind your ancient trophies won, 370
Your great forefathers virtues, and your own.

v. 358. *Lo ! angry Jove forbids your chief to stay.*] Eustathius remarks upon the behaviour of Agamemnon in his present distress : Homer describes him as racked with almost intolerable pains, yet he does not complain of the anguish he suffers but that he is obliged to retire from the fight.

This indeed, as it proved his undaunted spirit, so did it likewise his wisdom : had he shewed any unmanly dejection, it would have dispirited the army ; but his intrepidity makes them believe his wound less dangerous, and renders them not so highly concerned for the absence of their general.

Behold, the gen'ral flies ! deserts his pow'rs !
 Lo Jove himself declares the conquest ours !
 Now on yon' ranks impel your foaming steeds ;
 And, sure of glory, dare immortal deeds.

375

With words like these the fiery chief alarms
 His fainting host, and ev'ry bosom warms.
 As the bold hunter cheers his hounds to tear
 The brindled lion, or the tusky bear,
 With voice and hand provokes their doubting heart, 380
 And springs the foremost with his lifted dart :
 So god-like Hector prompts his troops to dare ;
 Nor prompts alone, but leads himself the war.
 On the black body of the foes he pours,
 As from the cloud's deep bosom, swell'd with show'rs, 385
 A sudden storm the purple ocean sweeps,
 Drives the wild waves, and tosses all the deeps.
 Say, muse ! when Jove the Trojan's glory crown'd,
 Beneath his arm what heroes bit the ground ?

v. 388. *Say, muse ! when Jove the Trojan's glory crown'd.*] The poet just before has given us an invocation of the muses, to make us attentive to the great exploits of Agamemnon. Here we have one with regard to Hector, but this last may perhaps be more easily accounted for than the other. For in that, after so solemn an invocation, we might reasonably have expected wonders from the hero : whereas in reality he kills but one man before he himself is wounded : and what he does afterwards seems to proceed from a frantic valour, arising from the smart of the wound : we do not find by the text that he kills one man, but overthrows several in his fury, and then retreats : so that

Assæus, Dolops, and Autonous dy'd, 390

Opites next was added to their side,

Then brave Hipponous fam'd in many a fight,

Opheltius, Orus, sunk to endless night,

Æsymnus, Agelaus ; all chiefs of name ;

The rest were vulgar deaths, unknown to fame. 395

As when a western whirlwind, charg'd with storms,

Dispels the gather'd clouds that Notus forms ;

one would imagine he invoked the muses only to describe his retreat.

But upon a nearer view, we shall find that Homer shews a commendable partiality to his own countryman and hero Agamemnon : he seems to detract from the greatness of Hector's actions, by ascribing them to Jupiter ; whereas Agamemnon conquers by the dint of bravery : and that this is a just observation, will appear by what follows. Those Greeks that fall by the sword of Hector, he passes over as if they were all vulgar men : he says nothing of them but that they died ; and only briefly mentions their names, as if he endeavoured to conceal the overthrow of the Greeks. But when he speaks of his favourite Agamemnon, he expatiates and dwells upon his actions ; and shews us, that those that fell by his hand were all men of distinction, such as were the sons of Priam, of Antenor, and Antimachus. It is true, Hector killed as many leaders of the Greeks as Agamemnon of the Trojans, and more of the common soldiers ; but by particularizing the deaths of the chiefs of Troy, he sets the deeds of Agamemnon in the strongest point of light, and by his silence in respect to the leaders whom Hector slew, he casts a shade over the greatness of the action, and consequently it appears less conspicuous.

The gust continu'd, violent, and strong,
 Rolls sable clouds in heaps on heaps along;
 Now to the skies the foaming billows rears, 400
 Now breaks the surge, and wide the bottom bares.
 Thus raging Hector, with resistless hands,
 O'erturns, confounds, and scatters all their bands.
 Now the last ruin the whole host appalls;
 Now Greece had trembled in her wooden walls; 405
 But wife Ulysses call'd Tydides forth,
 His soul rekindled, and awak'd his worth.
 And stand we deedless, O eternal shame!
 'Till Hector's arm involve the ships in flame?
 Hasten, let us join, and combat side by side. 410
 The warrior thus, and thus the friend reply'd.
 No martial toil I shun, no danger fear;
 Let Hector come; I wait his fury here.
 But Jove with conquest crowns the Trojan train;
 And, Jove our foe, all human force is vain. 415

v. 406. *But wife Ulysses call'd Tydides forth.*] There is something instructive in those which seem the most common passages of Homer, who by making the wise Ulysses direct the brave Diomed in all the enterprizes of the last book, and by maintaining the same conduct in this, intended to shew this moral, that valour should always be under the guidance of wisdom. Thus in the eighth book, when Diomed could scarce be restrained by the thunder of Jupiter, Nestor is at hand to moderate his courage; and this hero seems to have made a very good use of those instructions; his valour no longer runs out into rashness: though he is too brave to decline the fight, yet he is too wise to fight against Jupiter.

He sigh'd ; but fighting, rais'd his vengeful steel,
And from his car the proud Thymbræus fell :
Molion, the charioteer, pursu'd his lord,
His death ennobled by Ulysses' sword.
There slain, they left them in eternal night ; 420
Then plung'd amidst the thickest ranks of fight.
So two wild boars outstrip the following hounds,
Then swift revert, and wounds return for wounds.
Stern Hector's conquests in the middle plain
Stood check'd awhile, and Greece respir'd again. 425
The sons of Merops shone amidst the war ;
Tow'ring they rode in one refulgent car :
In deep prophetic arts their father skill'd,
Had warn'd his children from the Trojan field ;
Fate urg'd them on ; the father warn'd in vain, 430
They rush'd to fight, and perish'd on the plain !
Their breasts no more the vital spirit warms ;
The stern Tydides strips their shining arms.
Hypirochus by great Ulysses dies,
And rich Hyppodamus becomes his prize. 435
Great Jove from Ide with slaughter fills his fight,
And level hangs the doubtful scale of fight.
By Tydeus' lance Agastrophus was slain,
The far-fam'd hero of Pæonian strain ;
Wing'd with his fears, on foot he strove to fly, 440
His steeds too distant, and the foe too nigh ;
Thro' broken orders, swifter than the wind,
He fled, but flying left his life behind.

This Hector sees, as his experienc'd eyes
 Traverse the files, and to the rescue flies ; 445
 Shouts, as he pass, the chrystal regions rend,
 And moving armies on his march attend.
 Great Diomed himself was seiz'd with fear,
 And thus bespoke his brother of the war.
 Mark how this way yon' bending squadrons yield ! 450
 The storm rolls on, and Hector rules the field :
 Here stand his utmost force——The warrior said ;
 Swift at the word his pond'rous jav'lin fled ;
 Nor miss'd its aim, but where the plumage danc'd,
 Raz'd the smooth cone, and thence obliquely glanc'd. 455
 Safe in his helm (the gift of Phœbus' hands)
 Without a wound the Trojan hero stands ;
 But yet so stunn'd, that stagg'ring on the plain,
 His arm and knee his sinking bulk sustain ;
 O'er his dim sight the misty vapours rise, 460
 And a short darkness shades his swimming eyes.

v. 448. *Great Diomed himself was seiz'd with fear.*]
 There seems to be some difficulty in these words : this
 brave warrior, who has frequently met Hector in the bat-
 tle, and offered himself for the single combate, is here
 said to be seized with fear at the very sight of him : this
 may be thought not to agree with his usual behaviour,
 and to derogate from the general character of his intrep-
 idity ; but we must remember that Diomed himself has
 but just told us, that Jupiter fought against the Grecians ;
 and that all the endeavours of himself and Ulysses would
 be vain : this fear therefore of Diomed is far from being
 dishonourable ; it is not Hector, but Jupiter of whom he
 is afraid. Eustathius.

Tydides follow'd to regain his lance ;
 While Hector rose, recover'd from the trance,
 Remounts the car, and herds amidst the croud ;
 The Greek pursues him, and exults aloud. 465

Once more thank Phœbus for thy forfeit breath,
 Or thank that swiftness which outstrips the death.
 Well by Apollo are thy pray'rs repaid,
 And oft' that partial pow'r has lent his aid.
 Thou shalt not long the death deserv'd withstand, 470
 If any God assist Tydides' hand.

Fly then, inglorious ! but thy flight, this day,
 Whole hecatombs of Trojan ghosts shall pay.

Him, while he triumph'd, Paris ey'd from far,
 (The spouse of Helen, the fair cause of war) 475
 Around the fields his feather'd shafts he sent,
 From ancient Ilus' ruin'd monument ;
 Behind the column plac'd, he bent his bow,
 And wing'd an arrow at th' unwary foe ;
 Just as he stoop'd, Agastrophus' crest 480
 To seize, and drew the corselet from his breast.

v. 477. *Ilus' monument.*] I thought it necessary just to put the reader in mind, that the battle still continues near the tomb of Ilus : by a just observation of that, we may with pleasure see the various turns of the fight, and how every step of ground is won or lost, as the armies are repulsed or victorious.

v. 480. *Just as he stoop'd, Agastrophus' crest*

To seize, and drew the corselet from his breast.]

One would think that the poet at all times endeavoured to condemn the practice of stripping the dead, during the heat of action ; he frequently describes the victor

The bow-string twang'd ; nor flew the shaft in vain,
But pierc'd his foot, and nail'd it to the plain.

The laughing Trojan, with a joyful spring

Leaps from his ambush and insults the king. 485

wounded, while he is so employed about the bodies of the slain ; thus in the present book we see Agamemnon, Diomed, Ulysses, Elephenor, and Eurypylus, all suffer as they strip the men they slew ; and in the sixth book he brings in the wise Nestor directly forbidding it. Eustathius.

v. 483. *But pierc'd his foot.*] It cannot but be a satisfaction to the reader to see the poet smitten with the love of his country, and at all times consulting its glory ; this day was to be glorious to Troy, but Homer takes care to remove with honour most of the bravest Greeks from the field of battle, before the Trojans can conquer. Thus Agamemnon, Diomed, and Ulysses must bleed, before the poet can allow his countrymen to retreat. Eustathius.

v. 484. *The laughing Trojan.*] Eustathius is of opinion that Homer intended to satirize in this place the unwarlike behaviour of Paris : such an effeminate laugh and gesture is unbecoming a brave warrior, but agrees very well with the character of Paris : nor do I remember that in the whole Iliad any one person is described in such an indecent transport, though upon a much more glorious or successful action. He concludes his ludicrous insult with a circumstance very much to the honour of Diomed, and very much to the disadvantage of his own character ; for he reveals to an enemy the fears of Troy, and compares the Greeks to lions, and the Trojans to sheep. Diomed is the very reverse of him ; he despises and lessens the wound he received, and in the midst of his pain, would not gratify his enemy with the little joy he might give him by letting him know it.

He bleeds ! (he cries) some God has sped my dart;
 Would the same God had fixt it in his heart !
 So Troy reliev'd from that wide-wasting hand,
 Shall breathe from slaughter and in combate stand,
 Whose sons now tremble at his darted spear, 490
 As scatter'd lambs the rushing lion fear.

He dauntless thus: thou conqu'ror of the fair,
 Thou woman-warrior with the curling hair;
 Vain archer ! trusting to the distant dart,
 Unskill'd in arms to act a manly part ! 495
 Thou hast but done what boys or women can :
 Such hands may wound, but not incense a man.
 Nor boast the scratch thy feeble arrow gave,
 A coward's weapon never hurts the brave.

Not so this dart, which thou may'st one day feel : 500
 Fate wings its flight, and death is on the steel,
 Where this but lights, some noble life expires,
 Its touch makes orphans, bathes the cheeks of fires.
 Steeps earth in purple, gluts the birds of air,
 And leaves such objects, as distract the fair. 505

Ulysses hastens with a trembling heart,
 Before him steps, and bending draws the dart:
 Forth flows the blood ; an eager pang succeeds ;
 Tydides mounts, and to the navy speeds.

Now on the field Ulysses stands alone, 510
 The Greeks all fled, the Trojans pouring on:

But stands collected in himself and whole,
And questions thus his own unconquer'd soul.

What farther subterfuge ! what hopes remain ?
What shame, inglorious if I quit the plain ? 515
What danger, singly if I stand the ground,
My friends all scatter'd, all the foes around ?
Yet wherefore doubtful ? let this truth suffice ;
The brave meets danger, and the coward flies :
To die or conquer, proves a hero's heart ; 520
And knowing this, I know a soldier's part.

Such thoughts revolving in his careful breast,
Near, and more near, the shady cohorts preſt ;
Theſe, in the warrior, their own fate incloſe ;
And round him deep the ſteely circle grows. 525
So fares a boar whom all the troop ſurrounds
Of ſhouting huntſmen, and of clam'rous hounds ;
He grinds his iv'ry tusks ; he foams with ire ;
His ſanguine eyeballs glare with living fire ;
By theſe, by thoſe, on ev'ry part is ply'd ; 530
And the red ſlaughter ſpreads on ev'ry ſide.

v. 513. *And questions thus his own unconquer'd soul.*] This is a paſſage which very much ſtrikes me : we have a brave hero making a noble ſoliloquy, or rather calling a council within himſelf, when he was ſingly to encounter an army : it is impoſſible for the reader not to be in pain for ſo gallant a man in ſuch an imminent danger ; he muſt be impatient for the event, and his whole curioſity muſt be awakened until he knows the fate of Ulyſſes, who ſcorned to fly tho' encompass'd by an army.

Pierc'd thro' the shoulder, first Deiopis fell ;
 Next Ennomus and Thoon sunk to hell ;
 Chersidamas, beneath the navel thrust,
 Falls prone to earth, and grasps the bloody dust. 535
 Charops, the son of Hippasus, was near ;
 Ulysses reach'd him with the fatal spear ;
 But to his aid his brother Socus flies,
 Socus, the brave, the gen'rous, and the wise :
 Near as he drew, the warrior thus began. 540
 O great Ulysses, much enduring man !
 Not deeper skill'd in ev'ry martial flight,
 Than worn to toils, and active in the fight !
 This day two brothers shall thy conquest grace,
 And end at once the great Hippasian race, 545
 Or thou beneath this lance must press the field—
 He said, and forceful pierc'd his spacious shield :
 Thro' the strong brass the ringing jav'lin thrown,
 Plow'd half his side, and bar'd it to the bone.
 By Pallas' care, the spear, tho' deep infix'd. 550
 Stopp'd short of life, nor with his entrails mix'd.

v. 550. *By Pallas' care.*] It is a just observation, that there is no moral so evident, or so constantly carried on through the Iliad, as the necessity mankind at all times has of divine assistance. Nothing is performed with success, without particular mention of this ; Hector is not saved from a dart without Apollo, or Ulysses without Minerva. Homer is perpetually acknowledging the hand of God in all events, and ascribing to that only, all the victories, triumphs, rewards, or punishments of men. Thus the grand moral he laid down at the entrance of his poem, *Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή*, *The will*

The wound not mortal wife Ulysses knew,
 Then furious thus, (but first some steps withdrew.)
 Unhappy man ! whose death our hands shall grace !
 Fate calls thee hence, and finish'd is thy race. 555
 No longer check my conquests on the foe ;
 But pierc'd by this, to endless darkness go,
 And add one spectre to the realms below !

He spoke, while Socus seiz'd with sudden fright,
 Trembling gave way, and turn'd his back to flight, 560
 Between his shoulders pierc'd the following dart,
 And held its passage thro' the panting heart.
 Wide in his breast appear'd the grizly wound ;
 He falls ; his armour rings against the ground.
 Then thus Ulysses gazing on the slain : 565
 Fam'd son of Hippasus ! there press the plain ;

of God was fulfilled, runs through his whole work, and is with a most remarkable care and conduct put into the mouths of his greatest and wisest persons on every occasion.

Homer generally makes some peculiar God attend on each hero : for the ancients believed that every man had his particular tutelary deity ; these in succeeding times were called Dæmons or Genii, who (as they thought) were given to men at the hour of their birth, and directed the whole course of their lives. See Cebes's Tablet. Menander, as he is cited by Ammianus Marcellinus, styles them *μυσταγωγοὶ βίης*, *the invisible guides of life*.

v. 566. *Fam'd son of Hippasus !*] Homer has been blamed by some late censurers for making his heroes address discourses to the dead. Dacier replies, that passion dictates these speeches, and it is generally to the

There ends thy narrow span assign'd by fate,
 Heav'n owes Ulysses yet a longer date.
 Ah wretch ! no father shall thy corps compose,
 Thy dying eyes no tender mother close, 570
 But hungry birds shall tear those balls away,
 And hov'ring vultures scream around their prey.
 Me Greece shall honour, when I meet my doom,
 With solemn fun'rals and a lasting tomb.

dying, not to the dead, that they are addressed. However, one may say, that they are often rather reflexions, than insults. Were it otherwise, Homer deserves not to be censured for feigning what histories have reported as truth. We find in Plutarch, that Mark Antony upon sight of the dead body of Brutus, stopped and reproached him with the death of his brother Caius, whom Brutus had killed in Macedonia in revenge for the murder of Cicero. I must confess I am not altogether pleased with the raileries he sometimes uses to a vanquished warrior : which inhumanities, if spoken to the dying, would I think be yet worse than after they were dead.

v. 572. *And hov'ring vultures scream around their prey.*] This is not literally translated ; what the poet says gives us the most lively picture imaginable of the vultures in the act of tearing their prey with their bills : they beat the body with their wings as they rend it, which is a very natural circumstance, but scarce possible to be copied by a translator without losing the beauty of it.

v. 573. *Me Greece shall honour, when I meet my doom, with solemn fun'rals—*] We may see from such passages as these that honours paid to the ashes of the dead have been greatly valued in all ages : this posthumous honour was paid as a public acknowledgement that the person deceased had deserved well of his country, and consequently was an incitement to the living.

Then raging with intolerable smart, 575
 He writhes his body, and extracts the dart.
 The dart a tide of spouting gore pursu'd,
 And gladden'd Troy with sight of hostile blood.
 Now troops on troops the fainting chief invade,
 Forc'd he recedes, and loudly calls for aid. 580
 Thrice to its pitch his lofty voice he rears ;
 The well known voice thrice Menelaus hears :
 Alarm'd, to Ajax Telamon he cry'd,
 Who shares his labours, and defends his side.
 O friend ! Ulysses' shouts invade my ear ; 585
 Distress'd he seems, and no assistance near :
 Strong as he is ; yet, one oppos'd to all,
 Oppress'd by multitudes, the best may fall.
 Greece, robb'd of him, must bid her host despair,
 And feel a loss, not ages can repair. 590
 Then, where the cry directs, his course he bends ;
 Great Ajax, like the God of war, attends.

to imitate his actions : in this view there is no man but would be ambitious of them, not as they are testimonies of titles or riches, but of distinguished merit.

v. 592. *Great Ajax, like the God of war, attends.*]

The silence of other heroes on many occasions is very beautiful in Homer, but particularly so in Ajax, who is a gallant rough soldier, and readier to act than to speak : the present necessity of Ulysses required such a behaviour, for the least delay might have been fatal to him : Ajax therefore complying both with his own inclinations, and the urgent condition of Ulysses, makes no reply to Menelaus, but immediately hastens to his relief. The reader will observe how justly the poet maintains

The prudent chief in fore distress they found,
 With bands of furious Trojans compass'd round.
 As when some huntsman, with a flying spear, 595
 From the blind thicket wounds a stately deer ;
 Down his cleft side while fresh the blood distils,
 He bounds aloft, and scuds from hills to hills :
 'Till life's warm vapour issuing thro' the wound,
 Wild mountain wolves the fainting beast surround ; 600
 Just as their jaws his prostrate limbs invade,
 The lion rushes thro' the woodland shade,
 The wolves, tho' hungry, scour dispers'd away ;
 The lordly savage vindicates his prey.
 Ulysses thus, unconquer'd by his pains, 605
 A single warrior, half an host sustains :
 But soon as Ajax heaves his tower-like shield,
 The scatter'd crouds fly frighted o'er the field ;
 Atrides' arm the sinking hero stays,
 And sav'd from numbers, to his car conveys. 610
 Victorious Ajax plies the routed crew ;
 And first Doryclus, Priam's son, he slew,
 On strong Pandocus next inflicts a wound,
 And lays Lyfander bleeding on the ground :
 As when a torrent, swell'd with wintry rains, 615
 Pours from the mountains o'er the delug'd plains,

this character of Ajax throughout the whole Iliad, who
 is often silent when he has an opportunity to speak, and
 when he speaks, it is like a soldier, with a martial air,
 and always with brevity. Eustathius.

And pines and oaks, from their foundations torn,
 A country's ruins! to the seas are born:
 Fierce Ajax thus o'erwhelms the yielding throng,
 Men, steeds, and chariots, roll in heaps along. 620.

But Hector, from the scene of slaughter far,
 Rag'd on the left, and rul'd the tide of war:
 Loud groans proclaim his progress thro' the plain,
 And deep Scamander swells with heaps of slain.
 There Nestor and Idomeneus oppose 625
 The warrior's fury, there the battle glows;
 There fierce on foot, or from the chariot's height,
 His sword deforms the beauteous ranks of fight,
 The spouse of Helen dealing darts around,
 Had pierc'd Machaon with a distant wound: 630
 In his right shoulder the broad shaft appear'd,
 And trembling Greece for her physician fear'd.
 To Nestor then Idomeneus begun;
 Glory of Greece, old Neleus' valiant son!
 Ascend thy chariot, haste with speed away, 635
 And great Machaon to the ships convey.
 A wise physician, skill'd our wounds to heal,
 Is more than armies to the public weal.

v. 637. *A wise physician.*] The poet passes a very signal commendation upon physicians: the army had seen several of their bravest heroes wounded, yet were not so much dispirited for them all, as they are at the single danger of Machaon: but the person whom he calls a physician seems rather to be a surgeon; the cutting out of arrows, and the applying of anodynes being the province of the latter: however (as Eustathius says) we must con-

Old Nestor mounts the seat : beside him rode
 The wounded offspring of the healing God. 640.
 He lends the lash ; the steeds with sounding feet
 Shake the dry field, and thunder tow'rd the fleet.
 But now Cebriones, from Hector's car,
 Survey'd the various fortune of the war.
 While here (he cry'd) the flying Greeks are slain ; 645
 Trojans on Trojans yonder load the plain.
 Before great Ajax see the mingled throng
 Of men and chariots driv'n in heaps along !

clude that Machaon was both a physician and surgeon, and that those two professions were practised by one person.

It is reasonable to think, from the frequency of their wars, that the profession in those days was chiefly surgical : Celsus says expressly that the Diætic was long after invented ; but that Botany was in great esteem and practice, appears from the stories of Medea, Circe, etc. We often find mention among the most ancient writers, of women eminent in that art ; as of Agamede in this very book, v. 876. who is said (like Solomon) to have known the virtues of every plant that grew on the earth, and of Polydamne in the fourth book of the Odyssæis, v. 277, etc.

Homer, I believe, knew all that was known in his time of the practice of these arts. His methods of extracting of arrows, stanching of blood by the bitter root, fomenting of wounds with warm water, applying proper bandages and remedies, are all according to the true precepts of art. There are likewise several passages in his works that shew his knowledge of the virtues of plants, even of those qualities which are commonly (though perhaps erroneously) ascribed to them, as of the moly against enchantments, the willow which causes barrenness, the *nepenthe*, etc.

I know him well, distinguish'd o'er the field
 By the broad glitt'ring of the sev'n-fold shield, 650
 Thither, O Hector, thither urge thy steeds;
 There danger calls, and there the combat bleeds,
 There horse and foot in mingled deaths unite,
 And groans of slaughter mix with shouts of fight.

Thus having spoke, the driver's lash resounds; 655
 Swift thro' the ranks the rapid chariot bounds;
 Stung by the stroke, the coursers scour the fields,
 O'er heaps of carcasses, and hills of shields.
 The horses hoofs are bath'd in heroes gore,
 And dashing, purple all the car before; 660
 The groaning axle sables drops distils,
 And mangled carnage clogs the rapid wheels.
 Here Hector plunging thro' the thickest fight,
 Broke the dark phalanx, and let in the light:
 (By the long lance, the sword, or pond'rous stone, 665
 The ranks lie scatter'd, and the troops o'erthrown)
 Ajax he shuns thro' all the dire debate,
 And fears that arm, whose force he felt so late.
 But partial Jove, espousing Hector's part,
 Shot heav'n-bred horror thro' the Grecian's heart; 670

v. 669. *But partial Jove*, etc.] The address of Homer in bringing off Ajax with decency, is admirable: he makes Hector afraid to approach him: he brings down Jupiter himself to terrify him: so that he retreats not from a mortal, but from a God.

This whole passage is inimitably just and beautiful: we see Ajax drawn in the most bold and strong colours, and in a manner alive in the description. We see him

Confus'd, unnerv'd in Hector's presence grown,
Amaz'd he stood, with terrors not his own.

slowly and sullenly retreat between two armies, and even with a look repulse the one, and protect the other : there is not one line but what resembles Ajax ; the character of a stubborn but undaunted warrior is perfectly maintained, and must strike the reader at the first view. He compares him first to the lion for his undauntedness in fighting, and then to the ass for his stubborn slowness in retreating ; though in the latter comparison there are many other points of likeness that enliven the image : the havoc he makes in the field is represented by the tearing and trampling down the harvests ; and we see the bulk, strength, and obstinacy of the hero, when the Trojans in respect to him are compared but to troops of boys that impotently endeavour to drive him away.

Eustathius is silent as to those objections which have been raised against this last simile, for a pretended want of delicacy : this alone is conviction to me that they are all of latter date : for else he would not have failed to have vindicated his favourite poet in a passage that had been applauded many hundreds of years, and stood the test of ages.

But monsieur Dacier has done it very well in his remarks upon Aristotle. “ In the time of Homer (says that author) an ass was not in such circumstances of contempt as in ours : the name of that animal was not then converted into a term of reproach, but it was a beast upon which kings and princes might be seen with dignity. And it will not be very discreet to ridicule this comparison, which the holy scripture has put into the mouth of Jacob, who says in the benediction of his children, *Issachar shall be as a strong ass.*” Monsieur de la Motte allows this point and excuses Homer for his choice of this animal, but is unhappily disgusted at the circumstance of the *boys*, and

O'er his broad back his moony shield he threw,
And glaring round, by tardy steps withdrew.

the obstinate *gluttony* of the ass, which he says are images too mean to represent the determined valour of Ajax, and the fury of his enemies. It is answered by madam Dacier, that what Homer here images is not the gluttony, but the patience, the obstinacy, and strength of the ass, (as Eustathius had before observed.) To judge rightly of comparisons, we are not to examine if the subject from whence they are derived be great or little, noble or familiar; but we are principally to consider if the image produced be clear and lively, if the poet has the skill to dignify it by poetical words, and if it perfectly paints the thing it is intended to represent. A company of boys whipping a top is very far from a great and noble subject, yet Virgil has not scrupled to draw from it a similitude which admirably expresses a princess in the violence of her passion.

*Ceu quondam torto volitans sub verbere turbo,
Quem pueri magno in gyro vacua atria circum
Intenti ludo exercent; ille actus habena
Curvatis fertur spatiis: stupet inscia supra
Impubesque manus, mirata volubile buxum:
Dant animos plagæ—————etc. Æn. lib. 7.*

However upon the whole, a translator owes so much to the taste of the age in which he lives, as not to make too great a complement to a former; and this induced me to omit the mention of the word *ass* in the translation. I believe the reader will pardon me, if on this occasion I transcribe a passage from Mr. Boileau's notes on Longinus.

“ There is nothing (says he) that more disgraces a
“ composition than the use of mean and vulgar words;
“ infomuch that (generally speaking) a mean thought

Thus the grim lion his retreat maintains,

675

Beset with watchful dogs, and shouting swains,

“ expressed in noble terms, is more tolerable, than a
“ noble thought expressed in mean ones. The reason
“ whereof is, that all the world are not capable to
“ judge of the justness and force of a thought ; but
“ there is scarce any man who cannot, especially in a
“ living language, perceive the least meanness of words.
“ Nevertheless very few writers are free from this vice :
“ Longinus accuses Herodotus, the most polite of all
“ the Greek historians, of this defect ; and Livy, Sallust,
“ Virgil, have not escaped the same censure. Is it not
“ then very surprizing, that no reproach on this ac-
“ count has been ever cast upon Homer ? though he has
“ composed two poems each more voluminous than the
“ Æneid ; and though no author whatever has descend-
“ ed more frequently than he into a detail of little par-
“ ticularities ; yet he never uses terms which are not
“ noble, or if he uses humble words or phrases, it is
“ with so much art, that, as Dionysius observes, they
“ become noble and harmonious. Undoubtedly, if
“ there had been any cause to charge him with this
“ fault, Longinus had spared him no more than He-
“ rodotus. We may learn from hence the ignorance
“ of those modern critics, who resolving to judge of
“ the Greek without the knowledge of it, and never read-
“ ing Homer but in low and inelegant translations, im-
“ pute the meannesses of his translators to the poet
“ himself ; and ridiculously blame a man who spoke in
“ one language, for speaking what is not elegant in an-
“ other. They ought to know that the words of
“ different languages are not always exactly correspond-
“ ent ; that it may often happen that a word which is
“ very noble in Greek, cannot be rendered in another
“ tongue, but by one which is very mean. Thus the
“ word *asfnus* in Latin, and *ass* in English, are the vilest
“ imaginable ; but that which signifies the same animal

Rpuls'd by numbers from the nightly stalls,
 Tho' rage impels him, and tho' hunger calls,
 Long stands the show'ring darts and missile fires;
 'Then sow'rly slow th'indignant beast retires. 680
 So turn'd stern Ajax, by whole hosts repell'd,
 While his swoln heart at ev'ry step rebell'd.

As the slow beast with heavy strength indu'd,
 In some wide field by troops of boys pursu'd,
 Tho' round his sides a wooden tempest rain, 685
 Crops the tall harvest, and lays waste the plain;
 'Thick on his hide the hollow blows resound,
 The patient animal maintains his ground,
 Scarce from the field with all their efforts chas'd,
 And stirs but slowly when he stirs at last. 690
 On Ajax thus a weight of Trojans hung,
 The strokes redoubled on his buckler rung;
 Confiding now in bulky strength he stands,
 Now turns, and backward bears the yielding bands;
 Now stiff recedes, yet hardly seems to fly, 695
 And threats his followers with retorted eye.

“ in Greek and Hebrew, is of dignity enough to be em-
 “ ployed on the most magnificent occasions. In like
 “ manner the terms of *hog-herd* and *cow-keeper* in our
 “ language are insufferable, but those which answer to
 “ them in Greek, *σὺβάτης* and *βουκολος*, are graceful and
 “ harmonious: and Virgil, who in his own tongue
 “ intitled his eclogues *Bucolica*, would have been a-
 “ shamed to have called them in ours, the *dialogues of*
 “ *cow-keepers*.”

Fix'd

Fix'd as the bar between two warring pow'rs,
 While hissing darts descend in iron show'rs :
 In his broad buckler many a weapon stood,
 Its surface bristled with a quiv'ring wood; 700
 And many a jav'lin, guiltless on the plain,
 Marks the dry dust, and thirsts for blood in vain.
 But bold Eurypylus his aid imparts,
 And dauntless springs beneath a cloud of darts ;
 Whose eager jav'lin launch'd against the foe, 705
 Great Apisaon felt the fatal blow ;
 From his torn liver the red current flow'd,
 And his slack knees desert their dying load.
 The victor rushing to despoil the dead,
 From Paris' bow a vengeful arrow fled. 710
 Fix'd in his nervous thigh the weapon stood,
 Fix'd was the point, but broken was the wood.
 Back to the lines the wounded Greek retir'd,
 Yet thus, retreating, his associates fir'd.

v. 713. *Back to the lines the wounded Greek retir'd.*]
 We see here almost all the chiefs of the Grecian army withdrawn : Nestor and Ulysses the two great counselors ; Agamemnon, Diomed, and Eurypylus, the bravest warriors ; all retreated : so that now in this necessity of the Greeks, there was occasion for the poet to open a new scene of action, or else the Trojans had been victorious, and the Grecians driven from the shores of Troy. To shew the distress of the Greeks at this period, from which the poem takes a new turn, it will be convenient to cast a view on the posture of their affairs : all human aid is cut off by the wounds of their heroes, and all assistance from the Gods forbid by Jupiter :

What God, O Grecians! has your hearts dismay'd? 715
 Oh, turn to arms; 'tis Ajax claims your aid.
 This hour he stands the mark of hostile rage, -
 And this the last brave battle he shall wage;
 Haste, join your forces; from the gloomy grave
 The warrior rescue, and your country save 720

Thus urg'd the chief; a gen'rous troop appears,
 Who spread their bucklers, and advance their spears,
 To guard their wounded friend: while thus they stand
 With pious care, great Ajax joins the band:
 Each takes new courage at the hero's sight; 725
 The hero rallies and renews the fight.

Thus rag'd both armies like conflicting fires,
 While Nestor's chariot far from fight retires:
 His coursers steep'd in sweat, and stain'd with gore,
 The Greeks preserver, great Machaon bore. 730
 That hour, Achilles, from the topmost height
 Of his proud fleet, o'erlook'd the fields of fight;

whereas the Trojans see their general at their head, and Jupiter himself fights on their side. Upon this hinge turns the whole poem; the distress of the Greeks occasions first the assistance of Patroclus, and then the death of that hero draws on the return of Achilles. It is with great art that the poet conducts all these incidents: he lets Achilles have the pleasure of seeing that the Greeks were no longer able to carry on the war without his assistance: and upon this depends the great catastrophe of the poem. Eustathius.

v. 731. *That hour, Achilles, etc.*] Though the resentment of Achilles would not permit him to be an actor in the battle, yet his love of war inclines him to be a spectator: and as the poet did not intend to draw

His feasted eyes beheld around the plain
The Grecian rout, the slaying, and the slain.

His friend Machaon singled from the rest, 735

A transient pity touch'd his vengeful breast.

Strait to Menœtius' much lov'd son he sent ;

Graceful as Mars, Patroclus quits his tent,

(In evil hour ! then fate decreed his doom ;

And fix'd the date of all his woes to come !) 740

Why calls my friend ? thy lov'd injunctions lay,

Whatever thy will, Patroclus shall obey.

O first of friends ! (Pelides thus reply'd)

Still at my heart, and ever at my side !

The time is come, when yon' despairing host 745

Shall learn the value of the man they lost :

the character of a perfect man in Achilles, he makes him delighted with the destruction of the Greeks, because it conspired with his revenge : that resentment which is the subject of the poem, still prevails over all his other passions, even the love of his country ; for though he begins now to pity his countrymen, yet his anger stifles those tender emotions, and he seems pleased with their distress, because he judges it will contribute to his glory. Eustathius.

v. 735. *His friend Machaon, etc.*] It may be asked why Machaon is the only person whom Achilles pities ? Eustathius answers, that it was either because he was his countryman, a Thessalian ; or because Æsculapius, the father of Machaon, presided over physic, the profession of his preceptor Chiron. But perhaps it may be a better reason to say that a physician is a public good, and was valued by the whole army : and it is not improbable but he might have cured Achilles of a wound during the course of the Trojan wars.

Now at my knees the Greeks shall pour their moan,
 And proud Atrides tremble on his throne.
 Go now to Nestor, and from him be taught
 What wounded warrior late his chariot brought? 750
 For seen at distance, and but seen behind,
 His form recall'd Machaon to my mind;
 Nor could I, thro' yon' cloud, discern his face,
 The coursers past me with so swift a pace.

The hero said. His friend obey'd with haste, 755
 'Thro' intermingled ships and tents he past;
 The chiefs descending from their car he found;
 The panting steeds Eurymedon unbound.
 The warriors standing on the breezy shore,
 To dry their sweat, and wash away the gore, 760
 Here paus'd a moment, while the gentle gale
 Convey'd that freshness the cool seas exhale;

v. 747. *Now at my knees the Greeks shall pour their moan.*] The poet by putting these words into the mouth of Achilles, leaves room for a second embassy, and (since Achilles himself mentions it) one may think it would not have been unsuccessful: but the poet, by a more happy management, makes his friend Patroclus the advocate of the Greeks, and by that means his return becomes his own choice. This conduct admirably maintains the character of Achilles, who does not assist the Greeks through his kindness to them, but from a desire of revenge upon the Trojans: his present anger for the death of his friend, blots out the former one for the injury of Agamemnon; and as he separated from the army in a rage, so he joins it again in the like disposition. Eustathius.

Then to consult on farther methods went,
 And took their seats beneath the shady tent.
 The draught prescrib'd, fair Hecamede prepares, 765.
 Arsinous' daughter grac'd with golden hairs:
 (Whom to his aged arms, a royal slave,
 Greece, as the prize of Nestor's wisdom, gave)
 A table first with azure feet she plac'd;
 Whose ample orb a brazen charger grac'd: 770
 Honey new-press'd, the sacred flour of wheat,
 And wholesome garlic crown'd the sav'ry treat.
 Next her white hand an antique goblet brings..
 A goblet sacred to the Pylian kings,

v. 764. *And took their seats beneath the shady tent.*] The poet here steals away the reader from the battle, and relieves him by the description of Nestor's entertainment. I hope to be pardoned for having more than once repeated this observation, which extends to several passages of Homer. Without this piece of conduct, the frequency and length of his battles might fatigue the reader, who could not so long be delighted with continued scenes of blood.

v. 774. *A goblet sacred to the Pylian kings.*] There are some who can find out a mystery in the plainest things; they can see what the author never meant, and explain him into the greatest obscurities. Eustathius here gives us a very extraordinary instance of this nature: the bowl by an allegory figures the world; the spherical form of it represents its roundness; the Greek word which signifies the Doves, being spelled almost like the Pleiades, is said to mean that constellation; and because the poet tells us the bowl was studded with gold, those studs must needs imply the stars.

From eldest times: emboss'd with studs of gold, 775
 Two feet support it, and four handles hold ;
 On each bright handle, bending o'er the brink,
 In sculptur'd gold, two turtles seem to drink :
 A massy weight, yet heav'd with ease by him,
 When the brisk nectar overlook'd the brim. 780
 Temper'd in this, the nymph of form divine
 Pours a large potion of the Pramnian wine ;

v. 779. *Yet heav'd with ease by him.*] There has ever been a great dispute about this passage; nor is it apparent for what reason the poet should tell us that Nestor, even in his old age, could more easily lift this bowl than any other man. This has drawn a great deal of railery upon the old man, as if he had learned to lift it by frequent use; an insinuation that Nestor was no enemy to wine. Others with more justice to his character, have put another construction upon the words, which solves the improbability very naturally. According to this opinion, the word which is usually supposed to signify *another man*, is rendered *another old man*, meaning Machaon, whose wound made him incapable to lift it. This would have taken away the difficulty without any violence to the construction. But Eustathius tells us, the propriety of speech would require the word to be, not ἄλλος but ἑτερος, when spoken but of two. But why then may it not signify any other *old man*?

v. 782. *Pours a large potion.*] The potion which Hecamede here prepares for Machaon, has been thought a very extraordinary one in the case of a wounded person, and by some critics held in the same degree of repute with the balsam of Fierabras in Don Quixot. But it is rightly observed by the commentators, that Machaon was not so dangerously hurt, as to be obliged to a different regimen from what he might use at another time. Homer had just told us that he stayed on the

With goats-milk cheefe a flav'rous taste bestows,
 And last with flour the smiling surface strows.
 This for the wounded prince the dame prepares; 685
 The cordial bev'rage rev'rend Nestor shares:
 Salubrious draughts the warriors thirst allay,
 And pleasing conference beguiles the day.

Mean time Patroclus, by Achilles sent,
 Unheard approach'd, and stood before the tent. 790
 Old Nestor rising then, the hero led
 To his high seat: the chief refus'd, and said,
 'Tis now no season for these kind delays;
 The great Achilles with impatience stays.

sea-side to refresh himself, and he now enters into a long conversation with Nestor; neither of which would have been done by a man in any great pain or danger: his loss of blood and spirits might make him not so much in fear of a fever, as in want of a cordial; and accordingly this potion is rather alimentary than medicinal. If it had been directly improper in this case, I cannot help fancying that Homer would not have failed to tell us of Machaon's rejecting it. Yet after all, some answer may be made even to the grand objection, that wine was too inflammatory for a wounded man. Hippocrates allows wine in acute cases, and even without water in cases of indigestion. He says indeed in his book of ancient medicine, that the ancients were ignorant both of the good and bad qualities of wine: and yet the potion here prescribed will not be allowed by physicians to be an instance that they were so; for wine might be proper for Machaon, not only as a cordial, but as an *opiate*. Asclepiades, a physicaian, who flourished at Rome in the time of Pompey, prescribed wine in fevers, and even in phrensies to cause sleep. Coelius Aurelianus, *lib.* 4. c. 14.

To great Achilles this respect I owe ; 795
 Who asks what hero, wounded by the foe,
 Was borne from combat by thy foaming steeds ?
 With grief I see the great Machaon bleeds.
 This to report, my hasty course I bend ;
 Thou know'st the fiery temper of my friend. 800
 Can then the sons of Greece (the sage rejoin'd).
 Excite compassion in Achilles' mind ?

v. 801. *Can then the sons of Greece, etc.*] It is customary with those who translate or comment on an author, to use him as they do their mistress ; they can see no faults, or convert his very faults into beauties ; but I cannot be so partial to Homer, as to imagine that this speech of Nestor's is not greatly blameable for being too long : he crowds incident upon incident, and when he speaks of himself, he expatiates upon his own great actions, very naturally indeed to old age, but unreasonably in the present juncture. When he comes to speak of his killing the son of Augias, he is so pleased with himself, that he forgets the distress of the army, and cannot leave his favourite subject, until he has given us the pedigree of his relations, his wife's name, her excellence, the command he bore, and the fury with which he assaulted him. These and many other circumstances, as they have no visible allusion to the design of the speech, seem to be unfortunately introduced. In short, I think they are not so valuable upon any other account, as because they preserve a piece of ancient history, which had otherwise been lost.

What tends yet farther to make this story seem absurd, is what Patroclus said at the beginning of the speech, that he *had not leisure even to sit down* : so that Nestor detains him in the tent standing, during the whole narration.

They, that are of the contrary opinion, observe, that

Seeks he the sorrows of our host to know ?

This is not half the story of our woe.

Tell him, not great Machaon bleeds alone, 305

Our bravest heroes in the navy groan,

Ulysses, Agamemnon, Diomed,

And stern Eurypylus, already bleed.

there is a great deal of art in some branches of the discourse; that when Nestor tells Patroclus, how he had himself disobeyed his father's commands for the sake of his country: he says it to make Achilles reflect that he disobeys his father by the contrary behaviour: that what he did himself was to retaliate a small injury, but Achilles by fighting may save the Grecian army. He mentions the wound of Agamemnon at the very beginning, with an intent to give Achilles a little revenge, and that he may know how much his greatest enemy has suffered by his absence. There are many other arguments brought in the defence of particular parts; and it may not be from the purpose to observe, that Nestor might designedly protract the speech, that Patroclus might himself behold the distress of the army: thus every moment he detained him, enforced his arguments by the growing misfortunes of the Greeks. Whether this was the intention or not, it must be allowed that the stay of Patroclus was very happy for the Greeks; for by this means he met Eurypylus wounded, who confirmed him into a certainty that their affairs were desperate without Achilles's aid.

As for Nestor's second story, it is much easier to be defended; it tends directly to the matter in hand, and is told in such a manner as to affect both Patroclus and Achilles; the circumstances are well adapted to the person to whom they are spoken, and by repeating their father's instructions, he, as it were, brings them in, seconding his admonitions.

But ah ! what flatt'ring hopes I entertain !

Achilles heeds not, but derides our pain : 810

Ev'n 'till the flames consume our fleet he stays,

And waits the rising of the fatal blaze.

Chief after chief the raging foe destroys ;

Calm he looks on, and ev'ry death enjoys.

Now the slow course of all-impairing time 815

Unstrings my nerves, and ends my manly prime ;

Oh ! had I still that strength my youth possess'd,

When this bold arm th' Epeian pow'rs oppress'd,

The bulls of Elis in glad triumph led,

And stretch'd the great Itymonæus dead ! 820

Then, from my fury fled the trembling swains,

And ours was all the plunder of the plains :

Fifty white flocks, full fifty herds of swine,

As many goats, as many lowing kine :

And thrice the number of unrival'd steeds, 825

All teeming females, and of gen'rous breeds.

These, as my first essay of arms, I won ;

Old Neleus glory'd in his conqu'ring son.

Thus Elis forc'd, her long arrears restor'd,

And shares were parted to each Pylian lord. 830

v. 819. *The bulls of Elis in glad triumph led.*] Elis is the whole southern part of Peloponnesus, between Achaia and Messenia ; it was originally divided into several districts or principalities, afterwards it was reduced to two ; the one of the Elians, who were the same with the Epeians ; the other of Nestor. This remark is necessary for the understanding what follows. In Homer's time the city Elis was not built. Dacier.

The state of Pyle was sunk to last despair,
 When the proud Elians first commenc'd the war.
 For Neleus' sons Alcides rage had slain;
 Of twelve bold brothers, I alone remain!
 Oppress'd, we arm'd; and now this conquest gain'd, 835
 My fire three hundred chosen sheep obtain'd.
 (That large reprimand he might justly claim,
 For prize defrauded, and insulted fame,
 When Elis' monarch at the public course
 Detain'd his chariot, and victorious horse.) 840
 The rest the people shar'd; myself survey'd
 The just partition, and due victims pay'd.
 Three days were past, when Elis rose to war,
 With many a courser, and with many a car;
 The sons of Actor at their army's head 845
 (Young as they were) the vengeful squadrons led.

v. 839. *At the public course detain'd his chariot.*] It is said that these were particular games, which Augias had established in his own state, and that the Olympic games cannot be here understood, because Hercules did not institute them until he had killed this king, and delivered his kingdom to Phyleus, whom his father Augias had banished. The prizes of these games of Augias were prizes of wealth, as golden tripods *etc.* whereas the prizes of the Olympic games were only plain chaplets of leaves or branches: besides, it is probable Homer knew nothing of these chaplets given at the games, nor of the triumphal crowns, nor of the garlands wore at feasts; if he had, he would somewhere or other have mentioned them. Eustathius.

v. 845. *The sons of Actor.*] These are the same whom Homer calls the two Molions, namely, Eurytus

High on a rock fair Thryoessa stands,
 Our outmost frontier on the Pylian lands;
 Not far the streams of fam'd Alphæus flow;
 The stream they pass'd, and pitch'd their tents below. 850
 Pallas, descending in the shades of night,
 Alarms the Pylians, and commands the fight.
 Each burns for fame, and swells with martial pride
 Myself the foremost; but my fire deny'd;
 Fear'd for my youth, expos'd to stern alarms; 855
 And stopp'd my chariot, and detain'd my arms.
 My fire deny'd in vain: on foot I fled
 Amidst our chariots: for the Goddess led.

Along fair Arene's delightful plain,
 Soft Minyas rolls his waters to the main 860
 There, horse, and foot, the Pylian troops unite,
 And sheath'd in arms, expect the dawning light.
 Thence, ere the sun advanc'd his noon-day flame,
 To great Alphaus' sacred source we came.
 There first to Jove our solemn rites were paid; 865
 An untam'd heifer pleas'd the blue-ey'd maid,
 A bull Alphæus; and a bull was slain
 To the blue monarch of the wat'ry main.

and Creatus. Thryoessa, in the lines following, is the same town which he calls Thryon in the catalogue.

The river Minyas is the same with Anygrus, about half way between Pylos and Thryoessa, called Minyas, from the Minyans who lived on the banks of it. It appears from what the poet says of the time of their march, that it is half a day's march between Pylos and Thryoessa. Eustathius. Strabo, lib. 8.

In arms we slept, beside the winding flood,
 While round the town the fierce Epeians stood. 870
 Soon as the sun, with all-revealing ray,
 Flam'd in the front of heav'n, and gave the day;
 Bright scenes of arms, and works of war appear;
 The nations meet; there Pylos, Elis here.
 The first who fell, beneath my jav'lin bled; 875
 King Augias' son, and spouse of Agamede:
 (She that all simples healing virtues knew,
 And ev'ry herb that drinks the morning dew.)
 I seiz'd his car, the van of battle led;
 Th' Epeians saw, they trembled, and they fled. 880
 The foe dispers'd, their bravest warrior kill'd,
 Fierce as a whirlwind now I swept the field:
 Full fifty captive chariots grac'd my train;
 Two chiefs from each, fell breathless to the plain.
 Then Actor's sons had dy'd, but Neptune shrouds 885
 The youthful heroes in a veil of clouds.
 O'er heapy shields, and o'er the prostrate throng,
 Collecting spoils, and slaughter'ring all along,
 Thro' wide Buprasian fields we forc'd the foes,
 Where o'er the vales th' Olenian rocks arose; 890
 'Till Pallas stopp'd us where Alisium flows.
 Ev'n there, the hindmost of their rear I slay,
 And the same arm that led, concludes the day;
 Then back to Pyle triumphant take my way.

There to high Jove were public thanks assign'd, 895
As first of Gods, to Nestor, of mankind.

Such then I was, impell'd by youthful blood ;
So prov'd my valour for my country's good.

Achilles with unactive fury glows,
And gives to passion what to Greece he owes. 900

How shall he grieve, when to th' eternal shade
Her hosts shall sink, nor his the pow'r to aid !

O friend ! my memory recalls the day,

When gath'ring aids along the Grecian sea,

I, and Ulysses, touch'd at Pthia's port, 905

And enter'd Peleus' hospitable court.

A bull to Jove he slew in sacrifice,

And pour'd libations on the flaming thighs.

Thyself, Achilles, and thy rev'rend fire

Mencætiüs, turn'd the fragments on the fire. 910

Achilles sees us, to the feast invites :

Social we sit, and share the genial rites.

We then explain'd the cause on which we came,

Urg'd you to arms, and found you fierce for fame.

Your ancient fathers gen'rous precepts gave ; 915

Peleus said only this——“ My son ! be brave. -

v. 895. *There to high Jove were public thanks assign'd,
As first of Gods, to Nestor, of mankind.]*

There is a resemblance between this passage and one in the sacred scripture, where all the congregation *blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord, and the king, 1 Chron. oh. 29. v. 20.*

v. 916. *Peleus said only this——— “ My son ! be brave.]* The conciseness of this advice is very beauti-

Menœtius thus : “ Tho’ great Achilles shine
 “ In strength superior, and of race divine,
 “ Yet cooler thoughts thy elder years attend ;
 “ Let thy just counsels aid, and rule thy friend. 920
 Thus spoke your father at Theſſalia’s court ;
 Words now forgot, tho’ now of vaſt import.
 Ah ! try the utmoſt that a friend can ſay,
 Such gentle force the fierceſt minds obey ;
 Some fav’ring God Achilles’ heart may move ; 925
 Tho’ deaf to glory he may yield to love.

ful ; Achilles being haſty, active and young, might not have burdened his memory with a long diſcourſe, therefore Peleus comprehends all his inſtructions in one ſentence. But Menœtius ſpeaks more largely to Patroclus, he being more advanced in years, and mature in judgment ; and we ſee by the manner of the expreſſion, that he was ſent with Achilles, not only as a companion, but as a monitor, of which Neſtor puts him in mind, to ſhew that it is rather his duty to give good advice to Achilles, than to follow his caprice, and eſpouſe his reſentment. Eufſtathius.

v. 923. *Ah ! try the utmoſt, etc.*] It may not be ungrateful to the reader to ſee at one view the aim and deſign of Neſtor’s ſpeech. By putting Patroclus in mind of his father’s injunctions, he provokes him to obey him by a like zeal for his country : by the mention of the ſacrifice, he reprimands him for a breach to thoſe engagements to which the Gods were witneſſes : by ſaying that the very arms of Achilles would reſtore the fortunes of Greece, he makes a high complement to that hero, and offers a powerful inſinuation to Patroclus at the ſame time, by giving him to underſtand, that he may perſonate Achilles. Eufſtathius.

If some dire oracle his breast alarm,
 If ought from heav'n withhold his saving arm;
 Some beam of comfort yet on Greece may shine,
 If thou but lead the Myrmidonian line; 930
 Clad in Achilles' arms, if thou appear,
 Proud Troy may tremble, and desist from war;
 Press'd by fresh forces her o'er-labour'd train
 Shall seek their walls, and Greece respire again.

This touch'd his gen'rous heart, and from the tent 935
 Along the shore with hasty strides he went;
 Soon as he came, where, on the crowded strand,
 The public mart and courts of justice stand,
 Where the tall fleet of great Ulysses lies,
 And altars to the guardian Gods arise; 940
 There sad he met the brave Evæmon's son,
 Large painful drops from all his members run,
 An arrow's head yet rooted in his wound,
 The sable blood in circles mark'd the ground,
 As faintly reeling he confess'd the smart; 945
 Weak was his pace, but dauntless was his heart.
 Divine compassion touch'd Patroclus' breast,
 Who sighing, thus his bleeding friend address'd.

v. 928. *If ought from heav'n withhold his saving arm.*] Nestor says this upon account of what Achilles himself spoke in the ninth book; and it is very much to the purpose, for nothing could sooner move Achilles, than to make him think it was the general report in the army, that he shut himself up in the tent, for no other reason but to escape death, with which his mother had threatened him in discovering to him the decrees of the destinies. Dacier.

Ah hapless leaders of the Grecian host !
 Thus must ye perish on a barb'rous coast ? 950

Is this your fate, to glut the dogs with gore,
 Far from your friends, and from your native shore ?
 Say, great Eurypylus ! shall Greece yet stand ?
 Resists she yet the raging Hector's hand ?
 Or are her heroes doom'd to die with shame, 955
 And this the period of our wars and fame ?

Eurypylus replies : No more (my friend)
 Greece is no more ! this day her glories end.
 Ev'n to the ships victorious Troy pursues,
 Her force encreasing as her toil renews. 960

Those chiefs, that us'd her utmost rage to meet,
 Lie pierc'd with wounds, and bleeding in the fleet.
 But thou, Patroclus ! act a friendly part,
 Lead to my ships, and draw this deadly dart ;
 With lukewarm water wash the gore away, 965
 With healing balms the raging smart allay,
 Such as sage Chiron, fire of pharmacy,
 Once taught Achilles, and Achilles thee.
 Of two fam'd surgeons, Podalirius stands
 This hour surrounded by the Trojan bands ; 970

v. 969. *Of two fam'd surgeons.*] Though Podalirius is mentioned first for the sake of the verse, both here and in the catalogue, Machaon seems to be the person of the greatest character upon many accounts ; besides, it is to him that Homer attributes the cure of Philoctetes, who was lame by having let an arrow, dipt in the gall of the Hydra of Lerna, fall upon his foot ; a plain mark that Machaon was an abler physician than Chiron the centaur.

And great Machaon, wounded in his tent,
Now wants that succour which so oft' he lent.

To him the chief. What then remains to do?
Th' event of things the Gods alone can view.
Charg'd by Achilles' great command I fly, 975
And bear with haste the Pylian king's reply:
But thy distress this instant claims relief.
He said, and in his arms upheld the chief.
The slaves their master's slow approach survey'd,
And hides of oxen on the floor display'd! 980
There stretch'd at length the wounded hero lay,
Patroclus cut the forky steel away.
Then in his hands a bitter root he bruis'd;
The wound he wash'd, the styptic juice infus'd.
The closing flesh that instant ceas'd to glow, 985
The wound to torture, and the blood to flow.

who could not cure himself of such a wound. Podalirius had a son named Hypolochus, from whom the famous Hippocrates was descended.

v. 977. *But thy distress this instant claims relief.*]
Eustathius remarks, that Homer draws a great advantage for the conduct of his poem from this incident of the stay of Patroclus; for while he is employed in the friendly task of taking care of Eurypylos, he becomes an eye-witness of the attack upon the entrenchments, and finds the necessity of using his utmost efforts to move Achilles.

T H E
I L I A D.
B O O K XII

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The battle at the Grecian wall.

T H E Greeks being retired into their entrenchments, Hector attempts to force them; but it proving impossible to pass the ditch, Polydamas advises to quit their chariots, and manage the attack on foot. The Trojans follow his counsel, and having divided their army into five bodies of foot, begin the assault. But upon the signal of an eagle with a serpent in his talons, which appeared on the left hand of the Trojans, Polydamas endeavours to withdraw them again. This Hector opposes and continues the attack; in which, after many actions, Sarpedon makes the first breach in the wall: Hector also casting a stone of a vast size, forces open one of the gates, and enters at the head of his troops, who victoriously pursue the Grecians even to their ships.

WHILE thus the hero's pious cares attend
The cure and safety of his wounded friend,
Trojans and Greeks with clashing shields engage,
And mutual deaths are dealt with mutual rage.

It may be proper here to take a general view of the conduct of the Iliad: the whole design turns upon the wrath of Achilles: that wrath is not to be appeased

Nor long the trench or lofty walls oppose ; 5
 With Gods averse th'ill-fated works arose ;
 Their pow'rs neglected, and no victim slain,
 The walls were rais'd, the trenches sunk in vain.

Without the Gods, how short a period stands
 The proudest monument of mortal hands ! 10
 This flood, while Hector and Achilles rag'd
 While sacred Troy the warring hosts engag'd ;
 But when her sons were slain, her city burn'd,
 And what surviv'd of Greece to Greece return'd ;
 Then Neptune and Apollo shook the shore, 15
 Then Ida's summits pour'd their wat'ry store ;

but by the calamities of the Greeks, who are taught by their frequent defeats the importance of this hero : for in epic, as in tragic poetry, there ought to be some evident and necessary incident at the winding up of the catastrophe, and that should be founded upon some visible distress. This conduct has an admirable effect, not only as it gives an air of probability to the relation, by allowing leisure to the wrath of Achilles to cool and die away by degrees, (who is every where described as a person of a stubborn resentment, and consequently ought not to be easily reconciled) but also as it highly contributes to the honour of Achilles, which was to be fully satisfied before he could relent.

v. 9. *Without the Gods how short a period, etc.*] Homer here teaches a truth conformable to sacred scripture, and almost in the very words of the Psalmist ; *Unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.*

v. 15. *Then Neptune and Apollo, etc.*] This whole episode of the destruction of the wall is spoken as a kind of prophecy, where Homer in a poetical enthusiasm re-

Rhefus and Rhodius then unite their rills,
Carefus roaring down the stony hills,

lates what was to happen in future ages. It has been conjectured from hence that our author flourished not long after the Trojan war: for had he lived at a greater distance, there had been no occasion to have recourse to such extraordinary means to destroy a wall, which would have been lost and worn away by time alone. Homer (says Aristotle) foresaw the question might be asked, how it came to pass that no ruins remained of so great a work? and therefore contrived to give his fiction the nearest resemblance to truth. Inundations and earthquakes are sufficient to abolish the strongest works of man, so as not to leave the least remains where they stood. But we are told this in a manner wonderfully noble and poetical: we see Apollo turning the course of the rivers against the wall, Jupiter opening the cataracts of heaven, and Neptune rending the foundations with his trident: that is, the sun exhales the vapours, which descend in rain from the air or æther; this rain causes an inundation, and that inundation overturns the wall. Thus the poetry of Homer, like magic, first raises a stupendous object, and then immediately causes it to vanish.

What farther strengthens the opinion that Homer was particularly careful to avoid the objection which those of his own age might raise against the probability of this fiction, is, that the verses which contain this account of the destruction of the wall seem to be added after the first writing of the Iliad, by Homer himself. I believe the reader will incline to my opinion, if he considers the manner in which they are introduced, both here and in the seventh book, where first this wall is mentioned. There describing how it was made, he ends with this line.

Ὡς οἱ μὲν πονέοντο καρηκαμβάντες Ἀχαιοί

Æsepus, Granicus, with mingled force,
 And Xanthus foaming from his fruitful source : 20
 And gulphy Simois, rolling to the main
 Helmets, and shields, and godlike heroes slain :
 These turn'd by Phœbus from their wonted ways,
 Delug'd the rampire nine continual days ;

After which is inserted the debate of the Gods concerning the method of its destruction, at the conclusion whereof immediately follows a verse that seems exactly to connect with the former.

Δύσσετε δ' ἥελιος, τετέλεστο δὲ ἔργον Ἀχαιῶν.

In like manner in the present book, after the fourth verse,

Τάφρος ἔτι χάσειν Δαναῶν καὶ τείχος ὑπερθεῖν.

That which is now the thirty sixth, seems originally to have followed.

Τείχος εὐδμητον, κανάχιζε δὲ δῆρ' ἄρ' ἔργων, etc.

And all the lines between (which break the course of the narration, and are introduced in a manner not usual in Homer) seem to have been added for the reason above said. I do not insist much upon this observation, but I doubt not several will agree to it upon a review of the passages.

v. 24. *Nine continual days.*] Some of the ancients thought it incredible that a wall which was built in one day by the Greeks, should resist the joint efforts of three deities nine days : to solve this difficulty, Crates the Mallesian, was of opinion, that it should be writ, ἐν ἡμέρῃ, *one day*. But there is no occasion to have recourse to so forced a solution ; it being sufficient to observe, that nothing but such an extraordinary power could have so entirely ruined the wall, that not the least remains of it should appear ; but such a one as we have before said, Homer stood in need of. Eustathius.

The weight of waters saps the yielding wall, 25
And to the sea the floating bulwarks fall.
Incessant cataracts the thund'rer pours,
And half the skies descend in sluicy show'rs,
The God of ocean marching stern before,
With his huge trident wounds the trembling shore, 30
Vast stones and piles from their foundation heaves,
And whelms the smoaky ruin in the waves.
Now smooth'd with sand, and levell'd by the flood,
No fragment tells where once the wonder stood;
In their old bounds the rivers roll again, 35
Shine 'twixt the hills, or wander o'er the plain.

But this the Gods in later times perform;
As yet the bulwark stood, and brav'd the storm;
The strokes yet echo'd of contending pow'rs;
War thunder'd at the gates, and blood distain'd the tow'rs.
Smote by the arm of Jove, and dire dismay, 41
Close by their hollow ships the Grecians lay:
Hector's approach in ev'ry wind they hear,
And Hector's fury ev'ry moment fear.
He like a whirlwind, tofs'd the scatt'ring throng, 45
Mingled the troops, and drove the field along.
So 'midst the dogs and hunter's daring bands,
Fierce of his might, a boar or lion stands;
Arm'd foes around a dreadful circle form,
And hissing jav'lines rain an iron storm: 50
His pow'rs untam'd their bold assault defy,
And where he turns, the rout disperse, or die:

He foams, he glares, he bounds against them all,
And if he falls, his courage makes him fall.
With equal rage encompass'd Hector glows; 55
Exhorts his armies, and the trenches shows.
The panting steeds impatient fury breathe,
But snort and tremble at the gulph beneath;
Just on the brink they neigh, and paw the ground,
And the turf trembles, and the skies resound. 60
Eager they view'd the prospect dark and deep,
Vast was the leap, and headlong hung the steep:
The bottom bare, (a formidable show!)
And bristled thick with sharpen'd stakes below.
The foot alone this strong defence could force, 65
And try the pass impervious to the horse.
This saw Polydamas; who, wisely brave,
Restrain'd great Hector, and this counsel gave.
O thou! bold leader of our Trojan bands,
And you, confed'rate chiefs from foreign lands! 70
What entrance here can cumb'rous chariots find,
The stakes beneath, the Grecian walls behind?
No pass thro' those, without a thousand wounds,
No space for combat in yon' narrow bounds.
Proud of the favours mighty Jove has shown, 75
On certain dangers we too rashly run:
If 'tis his will our haughty foes to tame,
Oh may this instant end the Grecian name!
Here, far from Argos, let their heroes fall,
And one great day destroy, and bury all! 80

But

But should they turn, and here oppress our train,
 What hopes, what methods of retreat remain?
 Wedg'd in the trench, by our own troops confus'd,
 In one promiscuous carnage crush'd and bruis'd,
 All Troy must perish, if their arms prevail, 85
 Nor shall a Trojan live to tell the tale.
 Hear then ye warriors! and obey with speed;
 Back from the trenches let your steeds be led;
 Then all alighting, wedg'd in firm array,
 Proceed on foot, and Hector lead the way. 90
 So Greece shall stoop before our conqu'ring pow'r,
 And this (if Jove consent) her fatal hour.

This counsel pleas'd: the godlike Hector sprung
 Swift from his seat; his clanging armour rung.
 The chief's example follow'd by his train, 95
 Each quits his car and issues on the plain.
 By orders strict the charioteers enjoin'd,
 Compel the coursers to their ranks behind.
 The forces part in five distinguish'd bands,
 And all obey their sev'ral chief's commands. 100

v. 99. *The forces part in five distinguish'd bands.*] The Trojan army is divided into five parts, perhaps because there were five gates in the wall, so that an attack might be made upon every gate at the same instant: by this means the Greeks would be obliged to disunite, and form themselves into as many bodies, to guard five places at the same time.

The poet here breaks the thread of his narration, and stops to give us the names of the leaders of every battalion: by this conduct he prepares us for an action entirely new, and different from any other in the poem. Eustathius.

The best and bravest in the first conspire,
 Pant for the fight, and threat the fleet with fire :
 Great Hector glorious in the van of these,
 Polydamas, and brave Cebriones.

Before the next the graceful Paris shines, 105
 And bold Alcathous, and Agenor joins.

The sons of Priam with the third appear,
 Deiphobus, and Helenus the seer ;

In arms with these the mighty Asius stood,
 Who drew from Hyrtacus his noble blood, 100

And whom Arisba's yellow courfers bore,
 The courfers fed on Selle's winding shore.

Antenor's sons the fourth battalion guide,
 And great Æneas, born on fount-full Ide.

Divine Sarpedon the last band obey'd, 115
 Whom Glaucus and Asteropæus aid,

Next him, the bravest at their army's head,
 But he more brave than all the hosts he led.

Now with compacted shields in close array,
 The moving legions speed their headlong way : 120
 Already in their hopes they fire the fleet,
 And see the Grecians gasping at their feet.

While ev'ry Trojan thus, and ev'ry aid,
 Th' advice of wise Polydamas obey'd ;
 Asius alone, confiding in his car, 125
 His vaunted courfers urg'd to meet the war.

v. 125. *Asius alone confiding in his car,*] It appears from hence that the three captains who commanded each battalion, were not subordinate one to the other, but

Unhappy hero ! and advised in vain !

Those wheels returning ne'er shall mark the plain ;

No more those courfers with triumphant joy

Restore their master to the gates of Troy ! 130

Black death attends behind the Grecian wall,

And great Idomeneus shall boast thy fall !

Fierce to the left he drives, where from the plain,

The flying Grecians strove their ships to gain ;

Swift thro' the wall their horse and chariots past, 135

The gates half-open'd to receive the last.

Thither, exulting in his force, he flies ;

His following host with clamours rend the skies ;

To plunge the Grecians headlong in the main,

Such their proud hopes, but all their hopes were vain ! 140

To guard the gates, two mighty chiefs attend,

Who from the Lapiths warlike race descend ;

commanded separately, each being empowered to order his own troop as he thought fit : for otherwise Asius had not been permitted to keep his chariot when the rest were on foot. One may observe from hence, that Homer does not attribute the same regular discipline in war to the barbarous nations, which he had given to his Grecians ; and he makes some use too of this defect, to cast the more variety over this part of the description. Dacier.

v. 127. *Unhappy hero ! etc.*] Homer observes a poetical justice in relation to Asius ; he punishes his folly and impiety with death, and shews the danger of despising wife counsel, and blaspheming the Gods. In pursuance of this prophecy, Asius is killed in the thirteenth book by Idomeneus.

This Polypætes, great Perithous' heir,
 And that Leonteus, like the God of war.
 As two tall oaks, before the wall they rise ; 145
 Their roots in earth, their heads amidst the skies :
 Whose spreading arms with leafy honours crown'd,
 Forbid the tempest, and protect the ground ;
 High on the hills appears their stately form,
 And their deep roots for ever brave the storm. 150
 So graceful these, and so the shock they stand
 Of raging Asius, and his furious band.
 Orestes, Acamas in front appear,
 And Oenomaus and Thoon close the rear ;
 In vain their clamours shake the ambient fields, 155
 In vain around them beat their hollow shields ;
 The fearless brothers on the Grecians call,
 To guard their navies, and defend the wall.
 Ev'n when they saw Troy's fable troops impend,
 And Greece tumultuous from her tow'rs descend, 160
 Forth from the portals rush'd th'intrepid pair,
 Oppos'd their breasts, and stood themselves the war.

v. 143. *This Polypætes—And that Leonteus, etc.*]
 These heroes are the originals of Pandarus and Bitias in
 Virgil. We see two gallant officers exhorting their
 soldiers to act bravely; but being deserted by them, they
 execute their own commands, and maintain the pass a-
 gainst the united force of the battalions of Asius. Nor
 does the poet transgress the bounds of probability in the
 story: the Greeks from above beat off some of the Tro-
 jans with stones, and the gate-way being narrow, it was
 easy to be defended. Eustathius.

So two wild boars spring furious from their den,
 Rouz'd with the cries of dogs and voice of men;
 On ev'ry side the crackling trees they tear, 165
 And root the shrubs, and lay the forest bare;
 They gnash their tusks, with fire their eye-balls roll,
 'Till some wide wound lets out their mighty soul.
 Around their heads the whistling jav'lins sung,
 With sounding strokes their brazen targets rung; 170
 Fierce was the fight, while yet the Grecian pow'rs
 Maintain'd the walls, and mann'd the lofty tow'rs :
 To save their fleet, the last efforts they try,
 And stones and darts in mingled tempests fly.

As when sharp Boreas blows abroad, and brings 175
 The dreary winter on his frozen wings;
 Beneath the low-hung clouds the sheets of snow
 Descend, and whiten all the fields below.
 So fast the darts on either army pour,
 So down the rampiers rolls the rocky show'r; 180
 Heavy, and thick, resound the batter'd shields,
 And the deaf echo rattles round the fields.

With shame repuls'd, with grief and fury driv'n,
 The frantic Asius thus accuses heav'n :
 In pow'rs immortal who shall now believe? 185
 Can those too flatter, and can Jove deceive?

v. 185. *The speech of Asius.*] This speech of Asius is very extravagant: he exclaims against Jupiter for a breach of promise, not because he had broken his word, but because he had not fulfilled his own vain imaginations. This conduct, though very blameable in Asius,

What man could doubt but Troy's victorious pow'r
 Should humble Greece, and this her fatal hour?
 But look how wasps from hollow crannies drive,
 To guard the entrance of their common hive, 190
 Dark'ning the rock, while with unweary'd wings
 They strike th' assailants, and infix their stings;
 A race determin'd, that to death contend:
 So fierce these Greeks their last retreats defend.
 Gods! shall two warriors only guard their gates, 195
 Repel an army, and defraud the fates?

These empty accents, mingled with the wind,
 Nor mov'd great Jove's unalterable mind:
 To godlike Hector and his matchless might
 Was ow'd the glory of the destin'd fight. 200
 Like deeds of arms thro' all the forts were try'd,
 And all the gates sustain'd an equal tide;
 Thro' the long walls the stony show'rs were heard,
 The blaze of flames, the flash of arms appear'd.
 The spirit of a God my breast inspire, 205
 To raise each act to life, and sing with fire!
 While Greece unconquer'd kept alive the war,
 Secure of death, confiding in despair;
 And all her guardian Gods, in deep dismay,
 With unassisting arms deplor'd the day. 210

Ev'n yet the dauntless Lapithæ maintain
 The dreadful pass, and round them heap the slain.

is very natural to persons under a disappointment, who are ever ready to blame heaven, and turn their misfortunes into a crime. Eustathius.

First Damafus, by Polypætes' steel,
 Pierc'd thro' his helmet's brazen vizor, fell;
 The weapon drank the mingled brains and gore; 215
 The warrior sinks tremendous now no more!
 Next Ormenus and Pylon yield their breath:
 Nor less Leonteus strows the field with death;
 First thro' the belt Hippomachus he goar'd,
 Then sudden wav'd his unresisted sword; 220
 Antiphates, as thro' the ranks he broke,
 The faulchion strook, and fate pursu'd the stroke;
 Iamenus, Orestes, Menon, bled;
 And round him rose a monument of dead.

Meantime the bravest of the Trojan crew 225
 Bold Hector and Polydamas pursue;
 Fierce with impatience on the works to fall,
 And wrap in rowling flames the fleet and wall.
 These on the farther bank now stood and gaz'd,
 By heav'n alarm'd, by prodigies amaz'd: 230
 A signal omen stopp'd the passing host,
 Their martial fury in their wonder lost.
 Jove's bird on sounding pinions beat the skies;
 A bleeding serpent of enormous size,

v. 233. *Jove's bird on sounding pinions, etc.*] Virgil
 has imitated this passage in the eleventh Æneid, v. 751.

*Utque volans alte raptum cum fulva draconem
 Fert aquila, implicuitque pedes, atque unguibus hæsit;
 Saucius at serpens sinuosa volumina versat,
 Arrectisque horret squamis, et sibilat ore*

His talons trufs'd; alive, and curling round, 235
 He stung the bird, whose throat receiv'd the wound:
 Mad with the smart, he drops the fatal prey,
 In airy circles wings his painful way,
 Floats on the winds, and rends the heav'ns with cries:
 Amidst the host the fallen serpent lies. 240
 They, pale with terror, mark its spires unroll'd,
 And Jove's portent with beating hearts behold.
 Then first Polydamas the silence broke,
 Long weigh'd the signal, and to Hector spoke.
 How oft, my brother, thy reproach I bear, 245
 For words well-meant, and sentiments sincere?

*Arduus insurgens; illa haud minus urget obunco
 Luctantem rostro; simul aethera verberat alis.*

Which Macrobius compares with this of Homer, and gives the preference to the original, on account of Virgil's having neglected to specify the omen. *His prætermisiss (quod sinistra veniens vincentium prohibebat accessum, et accepto a serpente morsu prædam dolore dejecit; factoque Tripudio solistimo, cum clamore dolorem testante, prætervolat) quæ animam parabole dabant, velut exanime in latinis versibus corpus remansit.* Sat. l. 5. c. 14. But methinks this criticism might have been spared, had he considered that Virgil had no design, or occasion to make an omen of it; but took it only as a natural image, to paint the posture of two warriors struggling with each other.

v. 245. *The speech of Polydamas.*] The address of Polydamas to Hector in this speech is admirable: he knew that the daring spirit of that hero would not suffer him to listen to any mention of a retreat: he had already stormed the walls in imagination, and consequently the advice of Polydamas was sure to meet with a bad

True to those counsels which I judge the best,
I tell the faithful dictates of my breast.

To speak his thought is ev'ry freeman's right,
In peace and war, in council and in fight ; 250

And all I move, deferring to thy sway,
But tends to raise that pow'r which I obey.

Then hear my words, nor may my words be vain ;

Seek not, this day, the Grecian ships to gain ;

For sure to warn us Jove his omen sent, 255

And thus my mind explains its clear event.

The victor eagle, whose sinister flight

Retards our host, and fills our hearts with fright,

Dismiss'd his conquest in the middle skies,

Allow'd to seize, but not possess the prize ; 260

Thus tho' we gird with fires the Grecian fleet,

Tho' these proud bulwarks tumble at our feet,

Toils unforeseen, and fiercer, are decreed ;

More woes shall follow, and more heroes bleed.

So bodes my soul, and bids me thus advise : 265

For thus a skilful seer would read the skies.

reception. He therefore softens every expression, and endeavours to flatter Hector into an assent ; and though he is assured he gives a true interpretation of the prodigy, he seems to be diffident : but that his personated distrust may not prejudice the interpretation, he concludes with a plain declaration of his opinion, and tells him that what he delivers is not conjecture, but science, and appeals for the truth of it to the augurs of the army. Eustathius.

To him then Hector with disdain return'd;
(Fierce as he spoke, his eyes with fury burn'd)

Are these the faithful counsels of thy tongue?

Thy will is partial, not thy reason wrong: 270

Or if the purpose of thy heart thou vent,

Sure heav'n resumes the little sense it lent.

What coward counsels would thy madness move,

Against the word, the will reveal'd of Jove?

The leading sign, th'irrevocable nod, 275

And happy thunders of the fav'ring God,

These shall I slight? and guide my wav'ring mind

By wand'ring birds, that flit with ev'ry wind?

Ye vagrants of the sky! your wings extend,

Or where the suns arise, or where descend; 280

v. 267. *The speech of Hector.*] This speech of Hector's is full of spirit: his valour is greater than the skill of Polydamas, and he is not to be argued into a retreat. There is something very heroic in that line,

— *His sword the brave man draws,
And asks no omen but his country's cause.*

And if any thing can add to the beauty of it, it is in being so well adapted to the character of him who speaks it, who is every where described as a great lover of his country.

It may seem at first view that Hector uses Polydamas with too much severity in the conclusion of his speech: but he will be sufficiently justified, if we consider that the interpretation of the omen given by Polydamas might have discouraged the army; and this makes it necessary for him to decry the prediction, and insinuate that the advice proceeded not from his skill but his cowardice. Eustathius.

To right, to left, unheeded take your way,
 While I the dictates of high heav'n obey.
 Without a sign his sword the brave man draws,
 And asks no omen but his country's cause.
 But why should'st thou suspect the war's success? 285
 None fears it more, as none promotes it less :
 Tho' all our chiefs amid yon' ships expire,
 Trust thy own cowardice t' escape their fire.
 Troy and her sons may find a gen'ral grave,
 But thou can'st live, for thou can'st be a slave. 290
 Yet should the fears that wary mind suggests
 Spread their cold poison thro' our soldiers breasts.
 My jav'lin can revenge so base a part,
 And free the soul that quivers in thy heart.

Furious he spoke, and rushing to the wall, 295
 Calls on his host ; his host obey the call ;
 With ardour follow where their leader flies :
 Redoubling clamours thunder in the skies.
 Jove breathes a whirlwind from the hills of Ide,
 And drifts of dust the clouded navy hide : 300

v. 281. *To right, to left, unheeded take your way.*] Eustathius has found out four meanings in these two lines, and tells us that the words may signify east, west, north, and south. This is writ in the true spirit of a critic, who can find out a mystery in the plainest words, and is ever learnedly obscure : for my part, I cannot imagine how any thing can be more clearly expressed ; I care not, says Hector, whether the eagle flew on the right towards the sun-rising, which was propitious, or on the left towards his setting, which was unlucky.

v. 299. *Jove rais'd a whirlwind.*] It is worth our

He fills the Greeks with terror and dismay,
 And gives great Hector the predestin'd day.
 Strong in themselves, but stronger in their aid,
 Close to the works their rigid siege they laid.
 In vain the mounds and massy beams defend, 305
 While these they undermine; and those they rend;
 Upheave the piles that prop the solid wall;
 And heaps on heaps the smoaky ruins fall.
 Greece on her rampart stands the fierce alarms;
 The crouded bulwarks blaze with waving arms, 310
 Shield touching shield, a long refulgent row;
 Whence hissing darts, incessant, rain below.
 The bold Ajaces fly from tow'r to tow'r,
 And rouse, with flame divine, the Grecian pow'r.
 The gen'rous impulse ev'ry Greek obeys; 315
 Threats urge the fearful, and the valiant, praise.

Fellows in arms! whose deeds are known to fame,
 And you whose ardour hopes an equal name!
 Since not alike endu'd with force or art,
 Behold a day when each may act his part! 320
 A day to fire the brave, and warm the cold,
 To gain new glories, or augment the old.

notice to observe how the least circumstance grows in the hand of a great poet. In this battle it is to be supposed that the Trojans had got the advantage of the wind of the Grecians, so that a cloud of dust was blown upon their army: this gave room for this fiction of Homer, which supposes that Jove, or the air, raised the dust, and drove it in the face of the Grecians. Eustathius.

Urge

Urge those who stand, and those who faint excite ;
 Drown Hector's vaunts in loud exhortations of fight ;
 Conquest, not safety, fill the thoughts of all ; 325
 Seek not your fleet, but fall from the wall ;
 So Jove once more may drive their routed train,
 And Troy lie trembling in her walls again.

Their ardour kindles all the Grecian powers ;
 And now the stones descend in heavier showers. 330
 As when high Jove his sharp artillery forms,
 And opens his cloudy magazine of storms ;
 In winter's bleak, uncomfortable reign,
 A snowy inundation hides the plain ;
 He stills the winds, and bids the skies to sleep ; 335
 Then pours the silent tempest, thick and deep ;
 And first the mountain-tops are cover'd o'er,
 Then the green fields, and then the sandy shore ;
 Bent with the weight the nodding woods are seen,
 And one bright waste hides all the works of men ; 340
 The circling seas alone absorbing all,
 Drink the dissolving fleeces as they fall.
 So from each side increas'd the stony rain,
 And the white ruin rises o'er the plain.

Thus godlike Hector and his troops contend 345
 To force the ramparts, and the gates to rend ;
 Nor Troy could conquer, nor the Greeks would yield,
 'Till great Sarpedon tow'r'd amid the field ;

v. 348. *'Till great Sarpedon, etc.*] The poet here
 ushers in Sarpedon with abundance of pomp : he forces
 him upon the observation of the reader by the greatness

For mighty Jove inspir'd with martial flame

His matchless son, and urg'd him on to fame. 350

In arms he shines, conspicuous from afar,

And bears aloft his ample shield in air;

Within whose orb the thick bull-hides were roll'd,

Pond'rous with brass, and bound with ductile gold:

And while two pointed jav'lines arm his hands, 355

Majestic moves along, and leads his Lycian bands.

So press'd with hunger, from the mountain's brow

Descends a lion on the flocks below;

So stalks the lordly savage o'er the plain,

In sullen majesty, and stern disdain: 360

In vain loud mastives bay him from afar,

And shepherds gaul him with an iron war;

Regardless, furious, he pursues his way;

He foams, he roars, he rends the panting prey.

Resolv'd alike, divine Sarpedon glows 365

With gen'rous rage that drives him on the foes. }

of the description, and raises our expectations of him, intending to make him perform many remarkable actions in the sequel of the poem, and become worthy to fall by the hand of Patroclus. Eustathius.

v. 357. *So press'd with hunger, from the mountain's brow, descends a lion.*] This comparison very much resembles that of the prophet Isaiah, chap. 31. v. 4. where God himself is compared to a lion: *Like as the lion, and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall the Lord of hosts come down, that he may fight upon mount Sion.* Dacier.

He views the tow'rs, and meditates their fall,
To sure destruction dooms th' aspiring wall;
Then casting on his friend an ardent look,
Fir'd with the thirst of glory, thus he spoke. 370

Why boast we, Glaucus ! our extended reign,
Where Xanthus' streams enrich the Lycian plain,
Our num'rous herds that range the fruitful field,
And hills where vines their purple harvest yield,
Our foaming bowls with purer nectar crown'd, 375
Our feasts enhanc'd with music's sprightly sound ?
Why on those shores are we with joy survey'd,
Admir'd as heroes, and as Gods obey'd ?
Unless great acts superior merit prove,
And vindicate the bounteous pow'rs above. 380
'Tis ours, the dignity they give, to grace ;
'The first in valour, as the first in place.

v. 371. *The speech of Sarpedon to Glaucus.*] In former times kings were looked upon as the generals of armies, who to return the honours that were done them, were obliged to expose themselves first in the battle, and be an example to their soldiers. Upon this Sarpedon grounds his discourse, which is full of generosity and nobleness. We are, says he, honoured like Gods ; and what can be more unjust, than not to behave ourselves like men ? he ought to be superior in virtue, who is superior in dignity. What strength is there, and what greatness in that thought ? it includes justice, gratitude, and magnanimity ; justice, in that he scorns to enjoy what he does not merit ; gratitude, because he would endeavour to recompense his obligations to his subjects ; and magnanimity, in that he despises death, and thinks of nothing but glory. Eustathius. Dacier.

That when with wond'ring eyes our martial bands
 Behold our deeds transcending our commands,
 Such, they may cry, deserve the sov'reign state, 385
 Whom those that envy, dare not imitate !
 Could all our care elude the gloomy grave,
 Which claims no less the fearful than the brave,
 For lust of fame I should not vainly dare
 In fighting fields, nor urge thy soul to war. 390
 But since, alas ! ignoble age must come,
 Disease, and death's inexorable doom ;
 The life which others pay, let us bestow,
 And give to fame what we to nature owe ;

v. 387. *Could all our care, etc.*] There is not a more forcible argument than this, to make men condemn dangers, and seek glory by brave actions. Immortality with eternal youth, is certainly preferable to glory purchased with the loss of life ; but glory is certainly better than an ignominious life ; which at last, though perhaps late, must end. It is ordained that all men shall die, nor can our escaping danger secure us immortality ; it can only give us a longer continuance in disgrace, and even that continuance will be but short, though the infamy everlasting. This is incontestable, and whoever weighs his actions in these scales, can never hesitate in his choice : but what is most worthy of remark, is, that Homer does not put this in the mouth of an ordinary person, but ascribes it to the son of Jupiter. Eustathius. Dacier.

I ought not to neglect putting the reader in mind, that this speech of Sarpedon is excellently translated by Sir John Denham, and if I have done it with any spirit, it is partly owing to him.

Book XII. H O M E R's I L I A D. 353

Brave tho' we fall, and honour'd if we live, 395

Or let us glory gain, or glory give !

He said ; his words the list'ning chief inspire
With equal warmth, and rouse the warrior's fire ;
The troops pursue their leaders with delight,
Rush to the foe, and claim the promis'd fight. 400

Menestheus from on high the storm beheld,
Threat'ning the fort, and black'ning in the field ;
Around the walls he gaz'd, to view from far
What aid appear'd t' avert th' approaching war,
And saw where Teucer with th' Ajaces stood, 405
Of fight insatiate, prodigal of blood.

In vain he calls ; the din of helms and shields
Rings to the skies, and echoes thro' the fields,
The brazen hinges fly, the walls resound, [ground.
Heav'n trembles, roar the mountains, thunders all the

Then thus to Thoos ;—Hence with speed (he said) 411
And urge the bold Ajaces to our aid ;
Their strength, united, best may help to bear
The bloody labours of the doubtful war :
Hither the Lycian princes bend their course, 415
The best and bravest of the hostile force.

But if too fiercely there the foes contend,
Let Telamon, at least, our tow'rs defend,
And Teucer haste with his unerring bow,
To share the danger, and repel the foe. 420

Swift as the word, the herald speeds along
The lofty ramparts, through the martial throng ;

And finds the heroes bath'd in sweat and gore,
Oppos'd in combate on the dusty shore.

Ye valiant leaders of our warlike bands!

425

Your aid (said Thoos) Peteus' son demands,
Your strength, united, best may help to bear
The bloody labours of the doubtful war:

Thither the Lycian princes bend their course,

The best and bravest of the hostile force,

430

But if too fiercely here, the foes contend,

At least let Telamon those tow'rs defend,

And Teucer haste with his unerring bow,

To share the danger, and repel the foe,

Strait to the fort great Ajax turn'd his care,

435

And thus bespoke his brothers of the war;

Now valiant Lycomedes! exert your might,

And brave Oileus, prove your force in fight:

To you I trust the fortune of the field,

'Till by this arm the foe shall be repell'd;

440

That done, expect me to compleat the day——

Then, with his sev'nfold shield, he strode away.

With equal steps bold Teucer press'd the shore,

Whose fatal bow the strong Pandion bore.

v. 444. *Whose fatal bow the strong Pandion bore.*]

It is remarkable that Teucer, who is excellent for his skill in archery, does not carry his own bow, but has it borne after him by Pandion: I thought it not improper to take notice of this, by reason of its unusualness. It may be supposed that Teucer had changed his arms in this fight, and complied with the exigence of the battle, which was about the wall; he might judge that some

High on the walls appear'd the Lycian pow'rs, 445
 Like some black tempest gath'ring round the tow'rs;
 The Greeks, oppress'd, their utmost force unite,
 Prepar'd to labour in th' unequal fight;
 The war renews, mix'd shouts and groans arise;
 Tumultuous clamour mounts, and thickens in the skies.
 Fierce Ajax first th' advancing host invades, 451
 And sends the brave Epicles to the shades,
 Sarpedon's friend; across the warrior's way,
 Rent from the walls a rocky fragment lay;
 In modern ages not the strongest swain 455
 Could heave th' unwieldy burden from the plain.

other weapon might be more necessary upon this occasion, and therefore committed his bow to the care of Pandion. Eustathius.

v. 454. *A rocky fragment*, etc.] In this book both Ajax and Hector are described throwing stones of a prodigious size. But the poet, who loves to give the preference to his countrymen, relates the action much to the advantage of Ajax: Ajax, by his natural strength, performs what Hector could not do without the assistance of Jupiter. Eustathius.

v. 455. *In modern ages*.] The difference which our author makes between the heroes of his poem, and the men of his age, is so great, that some have made use of it as an argument that Homer lived many ages after the war of Troy: but this argument does not seem to be of any weight; for supposing Homer to have written two hundred and fifty, or two hundred and sixty years after the destruction of Troy, this space is long enough to make such a change as he speaks of: peace, luxury, or effeminacy would do it in a much less time. Dacier.

He pois'd, and swung it round ; then tofs'd on high,
It flew with force, and labour'd up the sky ;
Full on the Lycian's helmet thund'ring down,
The pond'rous ruin crush'd his batter'd crown. 460
As skilful divers from some airy steep,
Headlong descend, and shoot into the deep,
So falls Epicles ; then in groans expires,
And murm'ring to the shades the soul retires.

While to the ramparts daring Glaucus drew, 465
From Teucer's hand a winged arrow flew ;
The bearded shaft the destin'd passage found,
And on his naked arm inflicts a wound.
The chief, who fear'd some foe's insulting boast
Might stop the progress of his warlike host, 470
Conceal'd the wound, and leaping from his height,
Retir'd, reluctant from th'unfinish'd fight.
Divine Sarpedon with regret beheld
Disabled Glaucus slowly quit the field ;
His beating breast with gen'rous ardour glows, 475
He springs to fight, and flies upon the foes.
Alcmaon first was doom'd his force to feel ;
Deep in his breast he plung'd the pointed steel ;
Then, from the yawning wound with fury tore
The spear, pursu'd by gushing streams of gore ; 480
Down sinks the warrior with a thund'ring sound,
His brazen armour rings against the ground.

Swift to the battlement the victor flies,
 Tugs with full force, and ev'ry nerve applies ;
 It shakes ; the pond'rous stones disjointed yield ; 485
 The rowling ruins smoak along the field.
 A mighty breach appears ; the walls lie bare ;
 And, like a deluge, rushes in the war.
 At once bold Teucer draws the twanging bow,
 And Ajax sends his jav'lin at the foe ; 490
 Fix'd in his belt the feather'd weapon stood,
 And thro' his buckler drove the trembling wood ;
 But Jove was present in the dire debate,
 To shield his offspring, and avert his fate.
 The prince gave back, not meditating flight, 495
 But urging vengeance, and severer fight ;
 Then rais'd with hope, and fir'd with glory's charms,
 His fainting squadrons to new fury warms.
 O where, ye Lycians ! is the strength you boast ?
 Your former fame, and ancient virtue lost ! 500
 The breach lies open, but your chief in vain
 Attempts alone the guarded pass to gain :
 Unite, and soon that hostile fleet shall fall ;
 The force of pow'rful union conquers all.

v. 483. *Swift to the battlement the victor flies.*] From what Sarpedon here-performs, we may gather that this wall of the Greeks was not higher than a tall man ; from the great depth and breadth of it, as it is described just before, one might have concluded that it had been much higher : but it appears to be otherwise from this passage ; and consequently the thickness of the wall was answerable to the wideness of the ditch. Estathius.

This just rebuke inflam'd the Lycian crew, 505
 They join, they thicken, and th' assault renew;
 Unmov'd th' embody'd Greeks their fury dare,
 And fix'd support the weight of all the war;
 Nor could the Greeks repel the Lycian pow'rs,
 Nor the bold Lycians force the Grecian tow'rs. 510
 As on the confines of adjoining grounds,
 Two stubborn swains with blows dispute their bounds;
 They tug, they sweat; but neither gain, nor yield,
 One foot, one inch, of the contended field:
 Thus obstinate to death, they fight, they fall; 515
 Nor these can keep, nor those can win the wall.
 Their manly breasts are pierc'd with many a wound,
 Loud strokes are heard, and rattling arms resound,
 The copious slaughter covers all the shore,
 And the high ramparts drop with human gore. 520
 As when two scales are charg'd with doubtful loads,
 From side to side the trembling balance nods,

v. 511. *As on the confines of adjoining grounds.*] This simile, says Eustathius, is wonderfully proper; it has one circumstance that is seldom to be found in Homer's allusions; it corresponds in every point with the subject it was intended to illustrate: the measures of the two neighbours represent the spears of the combatants: the confines of the field shew that they engaged hand to hand; and the wall which divides the armies gives us a lively idea of the large stones that were fixed to determine the bounds of adjoining fields.

v. 521. *As when two scales, etc.*] This comparison is excellent on account of its justness; for there is nothing better represents an exact equality than a balance:

Book XII. H O M E R's I L I A D. 359
 (While some laborious matron, just and poor,
 With nice exactness weighs her woolly store)
 'Till pois'd aloft, the resting beam suspends 525
 Each equal weight; nor this, nor that, descends.
 So stood the war, 'till Hector's matchless might,
 With fates prevailing, turn'd the scale of fight.
 Fierce as a whirlwind up the walls he flies,
 And fires his host with loud repeated cries. 530
 Advance, ye Trojans! lend your valiant hands,
 Haste to the fleet, and toss the blazing brands!
 They hear, they run; and gath'ring at his call,
 Raise scaling engines, and ascend the wall:
 Around the works a wood of glitt'ring spears 535
 Shoots up, and all the rising host appears.
 A pond'rous stone bold Hector heav'd to throw,
 Pointed above, and rough and gross below:

but Homer was particularly exact, in having neither described a woman of wealth and condition, for such a one is never very exact, not valuing a small inequality; nor a slave, for such a one is ever regardless of her master's interest; but he speaks of a poor woman that gains her livelihood by her labour, who is at the same time just and honest; for she will neither defraud others nor be defrauded herself. She therefore takes care that the scales be exactly of the same weight.

It was an ancient tradition (and is countenanced by the author of Homer's life ascribed to Herodotus) that the poet drew this comparison from his own family; being himself the son of a woman who maintained herself by her own industry; he therefore to extol her honesty (a qualification very rare in poverty) gives her a place in his poem. Eustathius.

Not two strong men th' enormous weight could raise,
Such men as live in these degen'rate days. 540

Yet this, as easy as a swain could bear
The snowy fleece, he toss'd, and shook in air :
For Jove upheld, and lighten'd of its load.
Th' unwieldy rock, the labour of a God.

Thus arm'd, before the folded gates he came, 545
Of massy substance, and stupendous frame ;
With iron bars and brazen hinges strong,
On lofty beams of solid timber hung.

Then thund'ring thro' the planks with forceful sway,
Drives the sharp rock ; the solid beams give way, 550
The folds are shatter'd ; from the crackling door
Leap the resounding bars, the flying hinges roar.

Now rushing in the furious chief appears,
Gloomy as night ! and shakes two shining spears :
A dreadful gleam from his bright armour came, 555
And from his eyeballs flash'd the living flame.

He moves a God, resistless in his course,
And seems a match for more than mortal force.

Then pouring after, thro' the gaping space,
A tyde of Trojans flows, and fills the place ; 560
The Greeks behold, they tremble, and they fly ;
The shore is heap'd with death, and tumult rends the sky.

The End of the Second Volume.





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